

The Congo for Christ

THE
STORY OF THE
CONGO
MISSION-



By Rev J. B. Myers

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of the Congo Mission

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THE CONGO, LOOKING DOWN RIVER FROM UNDERHILL STATION.

THE CONGO FOR CHRIST

The Story of the Congo Mission

BY

✓
JOHN BROWN MYERS

(ASSOCIATION SECRETARY BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY)

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PREFACE.

NUMEROUS inquiries have been made for a concise history of the Congo Mission, brought up to date. With the view of meeting this demand the present volume has been written.

The late esteemed Treasurer of the Baptist Missionary Society, Mr. Joseph Tritton, published "The Rise and Progress of the Congo Mission" in 1885, which publication has for some time been out of print, and during the last ten years the Mission has greatly developed. Considerable information is also to be found in the Memoir of Thomas J. Comber, appearing in this Series, but that work is necessarily restricted by its biographical character. The story of this remarkable Mission has been told in such leisure moments as the writer could command, and may therefore, on that account, as also on account of the limited space at disposal, be inadequately told. It is, however, confidently believed no one can read these pages without being led to thank God for the great

work which has been accomplished, and for the heroic, Christ-like spirit displayed by those who have served, and suffered, and died in the prosecution of it.

The records of the Baptist Missionary Society have largely contributed to the matter, as also its woodcuts to the illustration of the volume.

It now only remains to express the prayerful hope that, as the book shall find its way into Christian homes and Christian Churches, into Sunday Schools, Christian Endeavour Societies, and other institutions, the study of it may help to sustain and deepen the interest which from its origin has been so extensively taken in this Congo Mission.

J. B. M.

May, 1895.





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THE CONGO FOR CHRIST.

CHAPTER I.

THE COUNTRY, PEOPLE, LANGUAGE, AND CLIMATE.

IT was in the January of 1878 that the Pioneer Baptist missionaries first landed upon the shores of the Congo, some six months after Mr. Stanley's emergence from the mysterious depths of the Dark Continent. The knowledge of Congo country, previous to the wonderful journey across Africa of that intrepid traveller, was most meagre. During the four centuries which elapsed since Diego Cam discovered the mouth of the river, little of interest had transpired save the entrance, almost immediately after that discovery, of some Portuguese Roman Catholic missionaries into the chief town of Congo proper, to which town they gave the name of San Salvador, and where they built a cathedral and received the king and the inhabitants generally into a nominal Christian Church. In less than a hundred years, however, the Portuguese were driven from the

place, who then transferred their ecclesiastical influence and privileges to St. Paul de Loanda on the coast of Angola.

Mention may also be made of a British expedition in charge of Captain Tuckey, sent out by the Admiralty at the beginning of the present century to explore the course of the Congo. But the results were slight, owing to the fatality with which the expedition was attended, though useful information concerning the lower reaches of the river was obtained.

The only other preliminary event requiring notice here, is the expedition sent out by the Royal Geographical Society, under the command of Lieutenant Grandy, organised for the search of Dr. Livingstone. Not finding it expedient to follow the course of the Congo from its mouth, Lieutenant Grandy proceeded from Ambriz, reaching San Salvador after a month's journey. The knowledge of the interior country which he was enabled to communicate to the Geographical Society was very valuable, and was of great service to the missionary pioneers. It will thus be seen that, at the best, the knowledge of the country obtainable was very limited, and bearing in mind that the details of Stanley's journey were not yet in their possession, the country into which these pioneers of the Cross were entering may be truly described as "Terra Incognita."

But while Congo country was at that time an unknown territory, it is very far from being so to-day. It would be out of place, in this volume, to detail the various steps which have resulted in the present development of the Congo Free State, the founding of which took place in 1885. A glance at the map recently published in Brussels, showing the state, the trading and the mission stations, the postal offices, the railway projections, as well as the various districts into which the vast territory of the Free State has been sub-divided, is abundantly sufficient to produce the impression that a more rapid and remarkable

instance of progress in civilisation has not been witnessed in this or in any other age.

The tract of country, over which the philanthropic and noble-minded King of the Belgians, Leopold II., rules as sovereign, and which by the consent of the Powers is on the point of being transferred to Belgium, thus virtually becoming a colony of that nation, includes an enormous part of equatorial Africa, extending in its more northerly points about 5° N. Lat., and in its



✕ — BAPTIST MISSION STATIONS. ○ OTHER MISSION STATIONS.

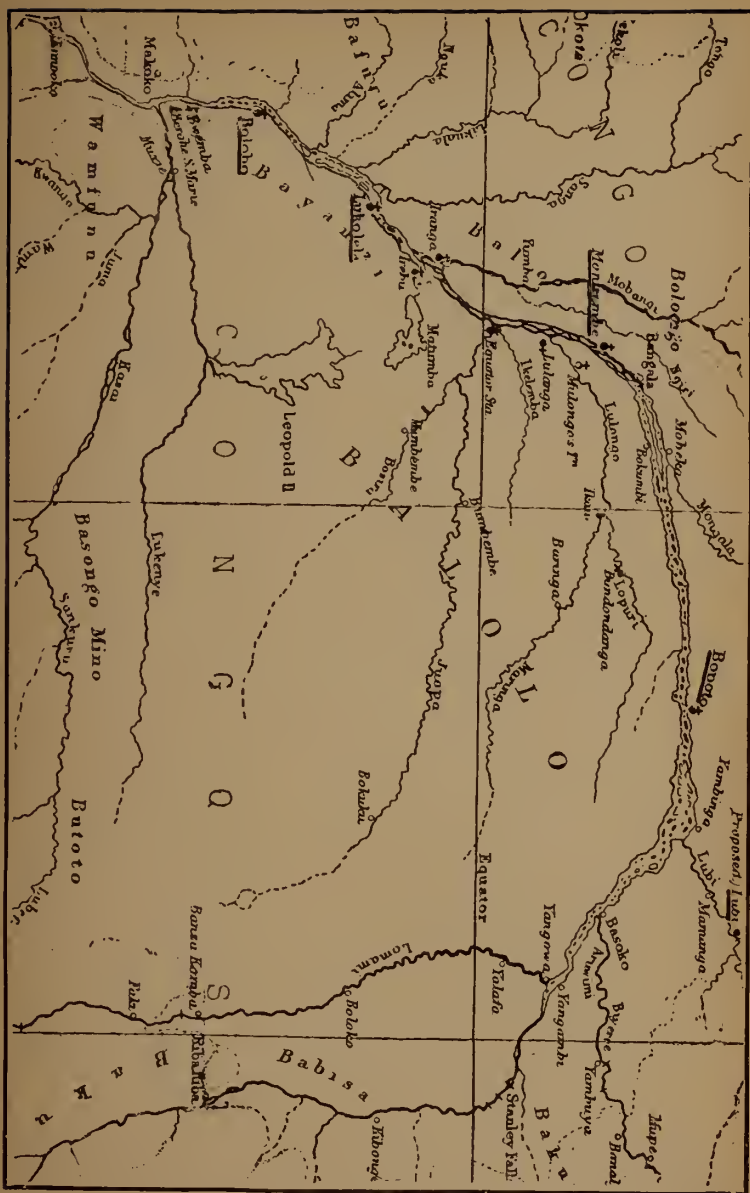
southern boundary 12° S. Lat., stretching across the continent to the great Eastern Lakes, 30° E. Long. The extent of area thus covered is no less than nearly 900,000 square miles, with splendid navigable waterways of some 5000 miles in length, the population being estimated at 50,000,000, an estimate which, on further explorations, may be largely exceeded.

It is a great satisfaction, in view of missionary operations, that in the delimitation of frontiers the

districts of Banana and of Boma, situated on the north bank of the Lower Congo, should have been ceded to the Free State, thereby the great gateway into the interior being neither under the control of the Portuguese nor of the French Powers.

It is appropriate that in this introductory chapter a brief reference should be made to the general questions of the Religion, Language, and Character of the Congo people, as also to the Climate of their country. As to the first of these questions, that of *Religion*, it may be said the ideas of a God, of a future state, and of retribution exist in the native mind. "But," as has been graphically remarked, "over all the religious beliefs of the Central African rests a dense cloud of superstition. He trembles before the witch-doctor. He kills his own wife when he imagines her bewitched. He kills one child because it cuts the upper teeth before the lower. He kills another child when it turns from one side to the other in sleep. The ghost-like medicine-man, the universal demi-god of savage nations, with his hideous miscellany of dead lizards, hide, nails of the dead, lions' claws and vulture-beaks, stalks through the village imparting strange efficacy to claw or bone, stick or stone. And as beneath the dull, leaden skies of the distant north there are believed to be structures haunted by ghosts and goblins, so here the forest, with its tenantry of owls and bats, is the abode of malignant spirits, and the rustling of the foliage at eventide is their mysterious dialogue. Shadowy vagueness and superstitious terror are the cardinal elements of Central African religion."

With respect to *Language*, it cannot but be of great advantage in the evangelisation of the Congo, that as the people,—with the possible exception of the dwarfs, the singular beings with whom Mr. Stanley has made us familiar,—are of the same origin, belonging to the great Bantu family, the language spoken, though varying much in dialect, and practically distinct in several of



its tongues, is yet throughout Central Africa governed by the same grammatical principles and rules. "In a general and wide study of the Bantu, or of any other family of tongues," says the Rev. W. Holman Bentley, who has devoted himself more especially to the study of language, "we may expect to find certain individualities, forms, and tendencies, much more developed in some languages than in others; some forms most rare and obscure in one member of the family occurring frequently in another, in which also the construction appears most simple. Thus, each language reduced, should not only aid us towards a fuller knowledge of the general principles of its class, but, should elucidate some of the difficulties belonging to other branches of its family." "The Congo language," says Dr. Cust, a high authority on the modern languages of Africa, "takes its place by the side of the Swahili, the Zulu, and the Pongwe, as one of the typical languages of the Bantu family. Differing from each other in many particulars, they still have such ineffaceable affinities as indicate their common stock. The mechanism of one often explains misunderstood anomalies in the others."

In *Character*, some of the tribes are less cruel and more open to influence than others. Whilst occasionally, the missionaries have been received with hostility, and in some towns have found it unsafe to dwell, generally speaking, their visits have been cordially welcomed, and their message listened to with respectful wonder. In mental capacity, the natives are said to be bright and quick, and by no means the stupid and stolid creatures they are sometimes represented. High hopes are entertained that, as Christianity and civilisation advance, the Congo people will take rank with the foremost nations of the earth.

A final word as to the *Climate* of the country. Hereafter we shall have occasion to touch upon the sad losses, which have so sorely tried the hearts of the supporters of African Missions, and of those of

Swampy



BOMA, CONGO RIVER.

this Congo Mission in particular. Optimists cannot commend the climate as being without risk to health. No one in his senses will go forth to a tropical country, where malarial fever is frequent, denying that he incurs peril ; but the reputation of the Congo climate has unquestionably had to suffer through consequences resulting from ignorance and lack of prudence. With increasing knowledge is coming greater medical skill, and given certain conditions—conditions deemed more and more possible, and the prospects of continuous and prosperous work will grow brighter.

This, then, is the nature of the country in which, and the kind of people among whom, the Christian Mission is being conducted, whose remarkable progress and beneficent labours are about to be traced in subsequent chapters.





CHAPTER II.

HOW THE CONGO MISSION BEGAN.

VERY evident to a devout mind is the working of a Divine Providence in the circumstances which led the Baptist Missionary Society to enter upon missionary labours in Congo land. In the origin of no similar enterprise were the concurrence of events and conditions more remarkable. The labours of other Societies whose representatives had entered from the East Coast—those of the Free Church of Scotland Mission on Lake Nyassa, the Church Missionary Society's Mission in Uganda, and the expedition sent out by the London Missionary Society to Lake Tanganyika—had awakened the interest of the Christian Church generally in the evangelisation of Africa.

For a long time the conviction had been strengthening in the minds of the supporters of the Baptist Society, as the result of experience gained at coast stations, that their true policy, wherever practicable, was to penetrate into the interior, where the Gospel might be preached unhindered by the hostile influence of demoralising traders. The opinion strongly expressed by many, pre-eminently by Dr. Livingstone,

who was continuously calling upon missionaries "to leave the unhealthy, fever-stricken, trade-cursed tribes on the coast," created a readiness to embrace any favourable opportunity for work in inland regions. In pursuance of this desire, special journeys at this very time were being made from the Cameroon stations, to ascertain if it were possible to enter the interior from that part of Western Africa.

It was just at this particular moment—date the 14th of May, 1877—when the Committee at home were desirous to start operations in central regions, and when missionaries abroad were exploring with a view to that end, that Mr. Robert Arthington, of Leeds, whose interest in the degraded peoples of Africa is well known, and whose gifts to promote their moral and spiritual welfare have been most generous, communicated with the Committee of the Society, calling their attention to a part of Africa, "not too far, I think," to quote his own words, "from places where you have stations, on which I have long had my eye with very strong desire that the blessings of the Gospel might be given to it. It is the country of the Congo." And then after referring to the Romish Missions of three hundred years ago, the traces of which may be seen in the Cathedral ruins at San Salvador, and giving certain information respecting the country thus mentioned, he concluded his letter in the following terms:—

"It is, therefore, a great satisfaction and a high and sacred pleasure to me to offer £1000 if the Baptist Missionary Society will undertake at once to visit these benighted, interesting people with the blessed light of the Gospel, teach them to read and write, and give them in imperishable letters the words of eternal truth. By-and-by, possibly, we may be able to extend the mission eastwards on the Congo at a point above the rapids.

"But, however, that may be, I hope that soon we shall have a steamer on the Congo, if it should

THE CATHEDRAL RUINS, SAN SALVADOR.



be found requisite, and carry the Gospel eastwards and south and north of the river, as the way may open as far as Nyangwé. The London Missionary Society take twenty miles west of Lake Tanganyika."

The receipt of this communication at so opportune a moment awakened the liveliest interest. Was not a voice from heaven speaking? Was not the hand of God discernible in such an incident?

On Mr. Arthington's letter being laid before the Directors of the Society, a special sub-committee was at once appointed to make all necessary inquiries and gain all possible information. The practical outcome of their deliberations was to suggest a preliminary exploration of the Congo. On Mr. Arthington being informed of this proposal, that gentleman wrote a second letter as under:—

"It is to the King of Congo, and the existing communities of the ancient Christian Romish civilisation now decayed, at San Salvador, of the country called Congo, that I have so long, and so strongly desired to send, in all its life-giving freshness, the Word of God, and to give them in their own tongue, *never to be forgotten*, the words of Jesus and His Apostles.

"Then, besides that, I want us to be on the Congo River by-and-by (when we get the intelligent interest and co-operation of the King of Congo) *above the rapids*, and sail the messengers of the everlasting Gospel on the mighty river up as far as to Nyangwé.

"Does not God call us by His providential indications to attempt great things for His Christ, and the Gospel.

"God is over all, and we may depend upon it He intends now to open out Africa to Christian evangelisation. Think of the thousands of souls come across by Cameron west of Tanganyika. Are these to live and die without the knowledge of the all-precious Gospel? Nay, hardly so. In my opinion, it would be wise, without delay, to send a man, most

prayerfully chosen, full of faith and love, who will determinately make his way to the King of Congo, and ask him if he would receive and encourage your Christian missionaries; and, at the same time, he should make all needful inquiries.

“If you find the man and inform me, I intend at once to send you £50 to encourage you.”

When the July quarterly meeting arrived, the special sub-committee were prepared with their report, which was unanimously and enthusiastically adopted, its recommendation being most gratefully to accept Mr. Arthington's proposals, and assure him of the deep and hearty sympathy of the Committee in his desire to send the Gospel into the interior of Africa by way of the West Coast; to appeal to the friends of Africa on behalf of the expenses of a proposed preliminary visit to San Salvador; and to appeal for one or more suitable pioneers to undertake the projected journey.

The public announcement of this decision called forth the fervent approval of the Churches, and promises of support were speedily forthcoming.

We have referred to indications of Divine leading, and in this connection we have now to mention a significant concurrence of events, surely to be regarded as something more than a mere coincidence. In the appeal made by the Committee for the funds needful to enter upon the preliminary undertaking, they made use of the following language:—“Who can say but that it may lead to the proclamation of the glad tidings of the Gospel all along the banks of the mighty Congo? That, with San Salvador as a base, the missionaries may be able to follow that mysterious river from above the Falls, as far as Nyangwé, and thus solve the great and perplexing question as to the Lualaba being identical with the Congo?”

“The gallant Cameron says:—‘This great Lualaba must be one of the head waters of the Congo, for where else could that giant among rivers, second only

to the Amazon in its volume, obtain the two million cubic feet of water which it unceasingly pours each second into the Atlantic.'

"Probably this question will soon be set at rest by the intrepid Stanley, who is now engaged in trying to find his way from Nyangwé to the West Coast, by the banks of the Congo, from the very point where Commander Cameron was most reluctantly compelled to turn southwards, and abandon his long-cherished idea of reaching the West Coast by the waters of the Congo."

At the very time the article containing this appeal was being prepared for the press by Mr. A. H. Baynes, the General Secretary of the Society, to whose skilfulness and enthusiasm, both as to its inception and management, the Congo Mission owes so much, Mr. Stanley's famous despatch, dated Embomma, Congo River, 10th August, 1877, announcing the successful accomplishment of his marvellous journey, and publishing his most important discovery of the identity of the Lualaba and the Congo rivers, was on its way to England.

By this great discovery the purposes of the Committee were naturally much strengthened; and, further, their way was made still more clear by the receipt of a donation from Mr. Wathen (afterward Sir Charles Wathen) of £500 to meet the estimated cost of the proposed preliminary expedition. Other gifts followed; and, as showing the spirit of intense interest which had been aroused, we may quote a typical letter received from a Staffordshire collier:—

"To the Secretaries of the Baptist Mission.

"25th September, 1877.

"DEAR SIRs, — Ever since my conversion, now some few years ago, I have taken a deep interest in mission work, especially mission work in Africa. I always carry a map of Africa in my pocket, and

often look over it in my spare time in the pit. For a long time I have been thinking of the great Congo River, and praying that missionaries may be sent there, and I now see in the *Missionary Herald* for this month that the answer is coming, and the Lord has put it into Mr. Arthington's mind.

"Times have not been very gay with us of late, but I have put by from time to time a little for Africa, and now with a glad heart I send you a five pound bank-note for the Congo Mission, with a prayer that the Lord may bless it, and I remain yours in Christ,

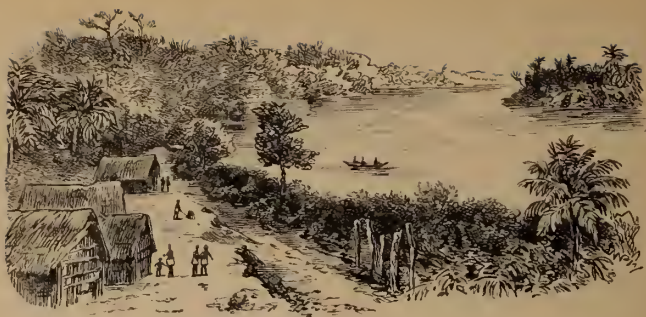
"A STAFFORDSHIRE COLLIER.

"P.S.—I have just heard about Mr. Stanley and his wonderful journey. How the Lord seems to be opening up Africa. Can't we all do something more for Africa?"

Careful deliberations as to the persons to whom this important expedition should be intrusted forced upon the judgment of the Directors the desirability of seeking the assistance of those who possessed some experience of African life, and who were men of proved capacity. The choice fell upon the Revs. George Grenfell and Thomas J. Comber, two missionaries then stationed at Cameroons, and whose recent journeyings into the interior from that part of the West Coast had helped to fit them to undertake the new enterprise. No sooner did the communication reach these brethren, inviting them in the name of the Lord Jesus to render this service, than they both placed themselves, in the spirit of heroic devotion and in humble dependence upon Divine help, unreservedly at the disposal of the Society.

Such, then, were the circumstances in which the Congo Mission was originated.





CHAPTER III.

EARLY DIFFICULTIES OVERCOME.

IT was not without an adequate sense of the formidable character of this Congo undertaking that the initiative steps were taken. The difficulties certain to be encountered were not under-estimated. It was deeply felt that much patience and prudence, courage and endurance, would be required.

As indicating the fitness of the men to whom the enterprise had been intrusted, no sooner had they intimated their readiness to serve, than they determined, whilst waiting for the detailed instructions from England, to take the first opportunity to sail down to the mouth of the Congo River, so that on the spot they might gain all the information obtainable, and thus be the better prepared to make the necessary preliminary preparations. The advantages secured were great. They gained a practical knowledge of the river for some sixty miles into the interior; they ascertained to what extent they might be able to rely upon native carriers; they entered into cordial relations with Mr. Bloeme of the Dutch Trading House, who promised them all the assistance



THE PRINCIPAL MEMBERS OF THE CONGO MISSIONARY EXPEDITION.
(From a photo by Mr. T. J. Conder.)

in his power ; and they were able to despatch a letter to the King of Congo advising his Majesty of their intended visit.

After returning to Cameroons the Home instructions arrived. And then, as soon as the preparations could be completed and the small party got together, they embarked again for the Congo, their spirit being expressed in the following terms:—"Earnestly, most earnestly do we pray that the gracious Lord, our Master and Guide, may give us favour in the eyes of the people, open up a way for us, go before us, be round about us *and ever with us* ; we indeed are weak, as but children, but He can so order and overrule, as to enable us to unfurl the Banner of the Cross at San Salvador, that with that for a base, from it, may enable us or others to *pierce the interior*, and carry the glad tidings of salvation through His blood all along the densely populated bank of the mighty Congo and its great tributaries."

After eight days' sail Banana was reached, and in fourteen days more the expedition, increased to thirty-five persons all told, was on its way to San Salvador. The journey was uneventful ; the route lay over rough roads, hills some seven hundred feet high, and through valleys where the paths were nearly blocked by tall thick grass, in some places as much as twelve feet in height. In eight days their destination was reached, and they were immediately ushered into the presence of the king. The first impressions of San Salvador were far from favourable. They were disappointed in the size of the town, as it did not contain more than about one thousand inhabitants. They found, too, that the Portuguese Jesuits, having heard of their intentions, had preceded them, and had arranged regular services, and in other ways had asserted their influence. They came, therefore, to the decision to settle, if possible, in preference, at Makouta or Kinsuka, of which places they had gained encouraging information. After

remaining, however, for a short time at San Salvador, and having visited the district of Makouta, they eventually came to the conclusion—especially as Dom Pedro, the king, expressed a very earnest wish that they should live in his town, at the same time assuring them of his protection—that it would be better to found a station, as originally intended, at San Salvador.

The purposes of the preliminary expedition being now fulfilled, it was deemed desirable for Mr. Comber to visit England, so that he might confer with the Committee of the Society as to future proceedings, and especially to procure reinforcements, Mr. Grenfell returning to Cameroons.

The enthusiasm which Mr. Comber's home-coming awakened, the success with which the appeal for new missionaries was attended, his marriage to Miss Minnie Rickards, the ever-memorable meeting in Cannon Street Hotel—all these deeply interesting particulars are described at length in Mr. Comber's Memoir, that book being one of the volumes of this Missionary Series.

After a six weeks' voyage, on the 9th of June, 1879, the missionaries—Mr. and Mrs. Comber and the three new men, Messrs. Bentley, Crudgington, and Hartland—arrived at Banana, and thence proceeded without delay to San Salvador. At the calling station previous to Banana they had heard with intense interest the most important news “that Mr. Stanley was expected soon from Zanzibar, where he had gone to procure carriers; and that he was intending to enter Africa from the mouth of the Congo, going first to Stanley Pool, with the object of establishing trading stations along the bank of the river.”

Though this important information did not lead to any alteration in their plan to attempt to reach the Upper Congo River from San Salvador as a base of operations, the missionaries nevertheless felt that Mr. Stanley's movements might have a very significant bearing upon their future action.

It is not proposed in these pages to detail the labours and experience of the Congo pioneers during the period they endeavoured to force their way to Stanley Pool from San Salvador; neither do we dwell here upon the first great trial which came upon the mission in the lamented death of Mrs. Comber. For these particulars we must refer our readers to Mr. Comber's biography, already mentioned. We cannot do better than sum up the results of this period in the words of Mr. Bentley: "Our work at San Salvador made good progress; but our aim was the evangelisation of the Upper Congo, and this had to be kept in view. Beyond the king's territory we were blocked by native traders. When we endeavoured to make our way from San Salvador towards Stanley Pool, they steadily and persistently refused to allow us to pass, in spite of all we told them of our errand. 'No,' they said, 'you white men stay on the coast; we will bring the produce to you there; but if you go to the Pool you will know our markets, and buy where we buy; our trade will be lost; then how shall we obtain our guns and powder, beads and brass, crockery-ware and knives, cloth, and all the fine things we get now? No, we will never let you pass our towns; and if you persist, you will be killed.' They could not conceive of people who were not traders. Thirteen attempts were made, first on one road and then on another, until Mr. Comber was attacked and shot. He was able to escape, and the slug was extracted. Then followed long palavering, and at last the road was declared open. Meanwhile, we learned that Mr. Stanley had returned to the Congo, and was engaged in making a road from Vivi, on the north bank of the Congo, the point where the river ceased to be navigable. He was said to be acting for the King of the Belgians, and to have instructions to open up communications between the coast and Stanley Pool. This was good news indeed."

It was then resolved that an effort should be made

THE VELLALA CATARACTS, CONGO RIVER.



[7. 30.

to reach Stanley Pool along either bank of the river, Mr. Comber and Mr. Hartland taking the south and Mr. Bentley and Mr. Crudgington the north bank. The attempt of the former party was soon found to be impracticable, and had to be abandoned ; but that of the latter was ultimately crowned with success. As this very remarkable journey, from obvious reasons, is barely mentioned in the memoir of Mr. Comber, it is appropriate that some detailed reference should find a place in this volume.

Starting from Musuka on the 17th of January, 1881, Messrs. Bentley and Crudgington kept the south bank until Matadi was reached, from which place they crossed over the river to Vivi on the opposite shore. For the next five days, as far as Isangila, they were able to avail themselves of Mr. Stanley's road. At some points they were charmed by the impressive scenery ; particularly was this the case just above the Yellala Falls. "On our right roared the Falls, tumbling and foaming madly over huge rocks in the bed of the river. On our left rose a very high mountain of rocks almost perpendicularly from the water, and we were amazed at the wonderful piece of engineering which Mr. Stanley has accomplished. To get round this mountain he had to blast and throw over huge masses of rock, to build up a strong road which the river should not wash away even when it rose to its highest, which was within a foot of the level of the road. At low water—*i.e.*, in the dry season—this road or embankment is about ten feet above the river. In front of us lay a fine undulating road through this wood which runs down to the edge of the river. Beautifully shaded from the hot scorching sun, it was a most inviting spot to camp for the remainder of the day. The air seemed alive with butterflies of every conceivable colour and tint. Birds of every description fluttered from branch to branch, while the small monkeys laughed defiance from the tops of the trees. We did not hurry our boys along this part of our

journey. Indeed we said we would like to spend a week here exploring the beauties of the place, and finding fresh bursts of lovely scenery ; but we were bound for Stanley Pool, so could only take a passing enjoyment."

On leaving Isangila the missionaries entered an unknown country, with their compass as their guide, and dependent upon the information they might pick up as they passed along. In some parts they had to pull themselves up steep ascents by tufts of grass and roots of trees. So difficult was the way that their headsmen refused to proceed farther, and, moreover, declared the people ahead to be bad people, with bad customs. The next day the same difficulty again occurred, the guides who had been obtained at the town where they had spent the previous night, declining to go beyond a certain point because they were not acquainted with the people in front. After remonstrating, it soon became evident that the men were conducting them in a wrong direction. "At length," says Mr. Crudgington, "we declared we would go no farther with them. They began palavering, and—we were in the midst of a lot of towns—the men collected with their guns, and we feared mischief." Having left their guides, they struck off in an almost opposite direction, but only to lose the path in a marshy river. Cutting, however, their way through the tall grass, they entered upon another path, which brought them to a small town, the people in which soon showed them a friendly spirit.

We may here refer to the difficulty these pioneer missionaries were continually encountering through the necessity of crossing the streams which so often impeded their progress. In some instances, these rivers were without bridges, and so had to be waded or swam across, the men getting their loads over as best they could ; and where the streams had been bridged over, it was only with creepers swung from trees on either side. "Sometimes," they said, "the

bridge would be so badly made, and swayed so dangerously, that when our men began to cross with their loads we had to steady it by means of other



A SUSPENSION BRIDGE.

long creepers tied on each side of the bridge, and at times they would be so high above the river that when we had crossed we had to scramble down a palm tree like bears down a bear-pole."

The accommodation available for the travellers was frequently of the most uninviting character, so undesirable that sometimes they had to sleep in the open, whilst drumming and dancing and yelling would be kept up till dawn. On arriving at a place called Kibindika they described the women as being the ugliest without exception they had ever seen—round flat faces, with noses of very broad proportions, and large thick lips. This ugliness, they remarked, is increased by putting on a mixture, which might, by its appearance, be soot and treacle. The hair is carefully preserved until it is of sufficient length to allow of its being clothed up with a similar mixture, giving the head a mop-like appearance. Over all this preparation of hair and face an oily mixture is poured. The ears, of course, are pierced, and, failing rings or beads, a bundle of rags, three or four inches long, sometimes containing medicine, helps to finish the adornment of the person.

After having been rather more than three weeks on their march, on the 10th of February, an event of great interest occurred, being nothing less than the sighting of Stanley Pool, the travellers' then "Ultima Thule." They had heard from the natives that the pool was not far distant, and they were naturally full of excitement. "Our anxiety," they say in their diary, "was now greater than it had ever been lest at the last hour we should get turned back and not accomplish what we wanted." After rising early the next morning, they passed through fine woodland country, with many sandy streams and some beautiful open spaces covered with short grass. At one of these open spaces on a little hill, Mr. Crudgington sighted a wide stretch of water on the horizon, which appeared a long streak of cloud. He exclaimed to Mr. Bentley, "Look, there's Stanley Pool!" They thought they must be mistaken, but another view a little farther on made it unmistakable. They then felt they could walk any distance to reach the Pool that day.

Not that, but the next day, however, to their inexpressible joy, found them on its shores. The physical characteristics of the Pool in many respects surpassed their anticipations. The White Dover Cliffs, the grass covered and tree-clad hill, the numerous sand islands, composed a lovely picture. The Pool itself they found to be in size about twenty-four miles long, and in some parts the same distance broad.

Here the missionaries made the acquaintance of the great chief, Nga Liema of Ntamo. After a long palaver they were admitted into his town, but their position was by no means without peril, as the following extract from their journal will show :—"We were conducted into an enclosure and shown a house. The people, many of whom were hideously painted about the face and body, were hanging about us with their formidable looking spears and knives. Some other chiefs, of not a very prepossessing appearance, examined the exterior of our baggage. In the evening our capata expressed great fear. The chiefs had been talking to him about our cloth, and had expressed a liking for ears and tongues. This a chief repeated in my hearing," says Mr. Crudgington, "and his manner of expressing himself conveyed very graphically his kind intentions. They also said, 'Kroo boys had plenty of salt in them.' This had a very significant meaning. Fearful, lest our Kroo boys, who were very much afraid of the people, should take the canoes and go off in the night, we had the headman and another to sleep in our house. I need not say we did not sleep comfortably that night. There were many rats running up and down the grass wall of the house by the side I was lying, and sometimes I wondered whether a native were outside trying to get his spear through. Needless fear, perhaps, as they were large enough in numbers to easily overpower us. But amongst such people any suspicion makes simple things assume horrible forms."

From Ntamo the missionaries proceeded to Nshasha

MAP OF STANLEY POOL, CONGO RIVER.



but when within a short distance of the town, some two hundred savages, hideously painted, rushed out upon them armed with knives, spears, clubs, and guns, and yelling in a most threatening manner. "As they advanced," records the journal, "we retreated, palavering with them the whole time, in order that our men might have a chance of escape. Once or twice we felt it was utterly useless to hope for our lives. True, our lives were in God's hands, and we did not fear though they might kill *us*; but our great sorrow and concern were for the men whom we had brought with us, and whose lives to a certain extent were in our hands."

Their escape, it would appear, was due to a dissension that arose amongst the chiefs.

On the 14th of February, just a month according to the day of the week from their start on the upward journey, the missionaries began to retrace their steps, their return journey being marked by various incidents. Two of these may be mentioned. When three-fourths of their way down they were agreeably surprised on entering a small town to see a white man's house some two or three hundred yards beyond. There they were pleased to find two brethren stationed of the Livingstone Inland Mission. After spending two pleasant and refreshing days in their fellowship they resumed their travel.

Soon after this incident, Messrs. Bentley and Crudgington were very fortunate in meeting with Mr. Stanley's camp. The great traveller was most friendly, showing them and their party all possible hospitality. Having persuaded them to stay the night, Mr. Stanley entered most sympathetically into their plans, and next morning sent them down to Isangila in his steam launch.

On the 15th of March these brave pioneers reached Musuka, the point from which they had started, with hearts overflowing with gratitude to their Heavenly Father and Divine Protector, the whole journey,

partly by river in canoes, and partly on land, having been accomplished, not reckoning the time occupied between Salvador and the Congo River, in forty-seven days.

This great feat, so essential to the development of the Congo Mission, having been thus so successfully achieved, it was felt by the missionaries that time and expense would be saved if Mr. Crudgington were to proceed forthwith to England to confer with the home authorities on the establishment of a Mission station at the Pool and at suitable intermediate points up from Banana.

Mr. Grenfell who had returned to the Congo from the Cameroons, wrote, shortly after Mr. Crudgington's departure, pleading with Mr. Baynes "to urge the Churches at home to do their utmost to fully realise the high privilege that the Master has given to us; the taking so important a part in the evangelisation of this part of Africa. When," he asks, "has a wider door been opened or a greater work attempted? Certainly not, in my judgment, since the noble founders of our Mission undertook their grand work in India."

The executive were not slow to respond to this appeal from the missionaries—indeed their appeals had been anticipated. Many generous gifts before Mr. Crudgington's arrival had been received, and amongst them a splendid sectional steel boat for use on the navigable parts of the Lower River, this being the gift of an anonymous friend at Plymouth, after which town the boat was named.

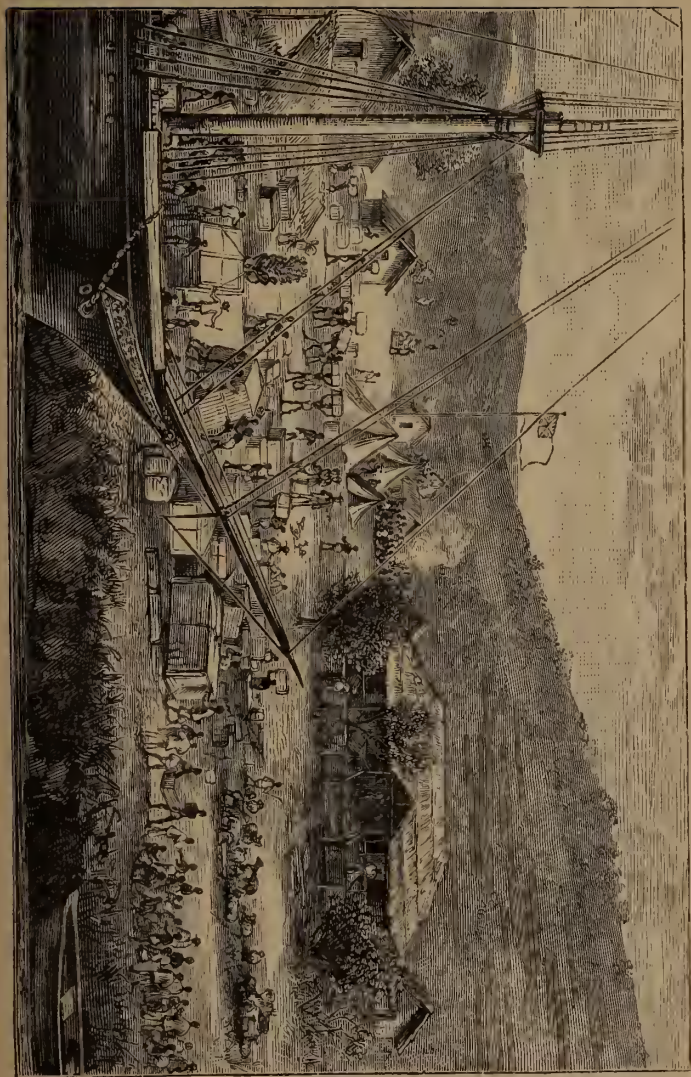
As the result of conference with Mr. Crudgington, the Society resolved that the station at San Salvador should be maintained; that the route to Stanley Pool should be by the north bank of the river; that a steam launch for service on the Upper Congo, according to Mr. Arthington's proposal, should be provided; that intermediate stations should be founded; and that six additional brethren should be added to the missionary staff. These decisions having been deliberately

and prayerfully reached, Mr. Crudgington, with Mr. Dixon, one of the accepted new missionaries, returned to the Congo.

The deep interest awakened by the announcement of these resolutions called forth further most encouraging expressions of sympathetic support, certain friends generously taking upon themselves the cost of maintaining some of the reinforcements.

And now it was felt that the time was fast approaching, when the proposed steamer would become the great want of the Congo Mission, as it was hoped that the intermediate stations on the Lower River would without delay be planted. It was consequently determined to put the vessel in hand at once, and its construction was duly intrusted to the well-known firm, Messrs. Thornycroft & Co., of Chiswick, the cost to be about £2000, Mr. Arthington meeting the entire expense, as well as contributing £3000 besides to be invested for its maintenance. To Mr. Grenfell would be committed the responsible task of putting the vessel together again at Stanley Pool, and it was deemed desirable that he should return to England for the purpose of watching its construction, Mr. Doke, a student of Bristol College, the last of the six new brethren (the other five being Messrs. Dixon, Weeks, Butcher, Moolenaar, and Hughes), assisting him. In the construction of the steamer a great difficulty presented itself, owing to the unnavigable nature of the greater part of the Lower Congo, thus necessitating the building of the boat in sections, each section not to weigh more than 64 lbs., the weight of a carrier's load. When it is stated that the steamer would consequently have to consist of some 800 loads, it will be felt how stupendous was the task to be accomplished, her length being 70 feet, and her width, 10 feet 6 inches. The boat was constructed with screw propellers, and in seven watertight compartments, and could be driven at full speed at twelve miles per hour.

DISCHARGING THE PACKAGES OF THE S.S. "PEACE" AT UNDERHILL, OR TUNDUWA STATION, CONGO RIVER.



Early in December, 1882, Messrs. Grenfell and Doke left Liverpool, taking with them this precious steamer, henceforth to be known as the *Peace*, at the donor's special request. But a terrible trial awaited the Mission, being nothing less than the death of Mr. Doke almost immediately on his arrival.

The cargo being discharged at Underhill station, and carriers being procured, the march up country began. About a year and a-half passed away before the *Peace* was launched, the reconstruction and whole management of the undertaking being regarded as a remarkable exhibition of resourcefulness and engineering skill.

Thus the early pioneer difficulties of this Congo Mission, from the starting of the preliminary expedition to the launching of the steamer, were one after the other, in dependence upon God's blessing, heroically and triumphantly overcome.





CHAPTER IV.

INGATHERING OF THE FIRST-FRUIITS.

AFTER perusing the foregoing pages some readers may be disposed to ask: Is it for such work as this a Missionary Society exists? Is this procedure after the Apostolic method? We thought the great commission ran: "Go and *preach the Gospel!*" Is this preaching the Gospel! Only failure to grasp the special conditions of such a field of missionary labour as that of the Congo could permit of these and similar interrogations. And how much of the work done at home would have to be disapproved on like grounds? But who in the missionary enterprise can distinguish between the religious and the secular, labelling this spiritual and that earthly? If ever there were a mission, originated and developed by men who brought to their work the purest, noblest, highest motives, men who found their inspiration and powers of endurance in living fellowship with the Divine Saviour, it was this Congo Mission.

But do not let us think these Congo pioneers were indifferent to spiritual results. It was truly no love of adventure, no mere liking for foreign travel, that

took them from home and friends. The power by which they were impelled was surely none other than the constraining love of Christ, and ardently through all the weary days did they long for the time to come when they would be able to devote all their energies to the more spiritual aspects of their service, and when their great message should everywhere be understood and received. "Oh for the time," exclaimed one of their number — and he but expressed the yearning of all their hearts—"when we can write of hundreds of souls saved! This is our only aim; we only live for this, and we shall not work in vain."

It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that the whole of the preliminary period was entirely occupied in travel and physical toil. Not only at San Salvador, but elsewhere, much direct and continuous evangelistic effort had been put forth. It is noteworthy that, as in William Carey's experience, and in that of other distinguished missionaries, years of patient labour had to precede the ingathering of results.

It was not until the March of 1886, more than eight years after the first entrance into Congo, that the first baptism gladdened the missionaries' hearts. The convert was Mantu, Mr. Comber's personal boy. For a long time he had given evidence of true conversion, but there was care not unduly to hurry the profession. Two other converts would have been baptised with Mantu, but one was in England with Mr. Bentley, and the other had a charge alleged against him which, though false, it was needful thoroughly to disprove.

With something akin to the rapt feelings with which Dr. Carey baptised his first Hindoo convert, Krishna Pal, Mr. Comber administered the Christian ordinance to Mantu, the first convert of the Congo Mission. The service took place about a mile outside San Salvador, in the presence of the principal men from the town, a few women, and the boys from the school, of whom at that time there were as many as fifty-two in attendance. It was a solemn occasion,

and the spectators were deeply impressed by what they saw and heard.

About six months after this event, Lo, the personal boy of Mr. Davies, who went to Congo in 1885, became a decided Christian. The account written by Mr. Davies from Stanley Pool is so beautifully interesting—not only because of the information it imparts concerning Lo, but as well because of the insight it gives into the spirit of the missionary—that we are glad to reproduce it in these pages. “During all the travelling I have had since the beginning of April, Lo and I have been thrown a good deal together; and at night in the tent, when everything was settled for the night, we generally talked together a good bit about God and His Son; and while I was pleased with the conceptions he was forming about God, I never said anything to him to make him declare himself a Christian, but preferred to wait and let careful instruction bear its own fruit in course of time. There was always the utmost naturalness and freedom in all we said, and it was he, more than I, who led our chats round from things in general to God and salvation. I shall never forget the decisive night, in a native house a day’s march from here. We had had an hour or two’s talk first with some of the carriers, which Lo carried on for me with great earnestness with them.

“By nine o’clock they had all gone out to sleep, and, as usual, we had a little quiet talk between ourselves, only, instead of gradually settling down to sleep, he made more anxious inquiries than I had ever heard before about salvation, asking me to teach him. He told me he wanted to serve God and to do right, but felt unable from his weakness; and a thing that pleased me was, he seemed to want more to be saved from sin—from sin itself—rather than the punishment of it only. He showed so much knowledge of the true nature of God and of sin, that I felt I must do all I could to help him to be really converted that night; and as he leant over the side of my

bed and took my hand, I put my arms round him and drew him to me, and I could feel all his frame trembling and his breast throbbing, not with hysterical excitement, but with intense emotion ; in fact, we were both so quiet, that any one half asleep would not have heard us. For long intervals we could neither of us speak at all, but we both prayed ; and as I thought of things that might be helpful, I spoke to him. We went on in this way till nearly midnight, when we lay down again, he possessing the new heart which he was longing for. Every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth ; and with all his heart he had that night asked for salvation and sought the Saviour. He is only a boy, perhaps fourteen years old, and he needs help. I have loved him for a long time, and all the more now ; and as his failings and weaknesses much resemble mine at his age, I may be able to help him till he has developed a strong Christian character, and, as far as man's help goes, can stand alone."

In the meantime, the good work was proceeding at San Salvador. It being felt that several of the people there had become real Christians, the missionaries in charge of the stations resolved to have a week of special meetings. The natives came in large numbers, so much so, that the new large chapel then in process of building, capable of holding 500 persons, had to be used for the services. The names of over a hundred inquirers were taken ; many brought their fetishes and publicly discarded them.

As Mr. Comber's knowledge of the people was of longer duration, and of the language more complete than that of the missionaries then at San Salvador, it was deemed desirable that he should be specially asked to pay the station a visit at this deeply interesting but critical time. He arrived on a Friday, in good time for the Sunday's services. Unfortunately, as he thought, when the Sunday came the weather was anything but inviting, being wet and chilly. It

was questioned whether it would be wise to hold the morning service, but when the bell was rung, in five minutes the chapel was being filled—the women hurrying along clanking their heavy anklets. Mr. Comber was thrilled with joy and gratitude when the people joined in singing the opening hymn; and when he addressed them from the words: "Old things are passed away, behold, all things are become



INTERIOR OF THE CHAPEL, SAN SALVADOR.

new," the utmost decorum and most earnest attention prevailed.

At other meetings it was most delightful to hear the simple prayers of the native converts, and the fervent words with which they entreated their fellow-countrymen to become disciples of Jesus also. Amongst those who declared themselves Christians were several of the wives of the old king. Dom

Pedro did not altogether approve of their attendance at the meetings. On his forbidding them to go, they felt they ought not to be obedient. "The king became furious. He took gun and sword, and in spite of his age and enormous size, which renders it difficult for him to move about, he came to the outside of our gate, and waited in the dark for his wives. Immediately after the meeting, as the people were going to their homes, there was a tremendous clanking of anklets and screaming, as the king was found outside the gate; but no harm came, only one woman being struck with the flat of the king's sword. His wives, however, were not allowed in his enclosure, and they slept with Matoko's women. The following day three of them came to see me (Mr. Comber) privately, for a little encouragement and advice in their trouble. They were very strongly determined not to give up attending the meetings, and one of them said, 'Never mind if he kill us. We don't mind dying for Jesus; He died for us.' I promised to go and see the king about it, and after a few words to them, and a little prayer, in which one of them joined, they went back to Matoko's enclosure, and I went to see the king. I told him that as king he should require obedience in many things, but that it was very wrong to try to force his people in matters of religion, as their souls were at stake. After a long talk he agreed to withdraw his opposition, and to let his wives return to him, but wished the time of the evening meetings to be altered to an earlier hour, so that his wives should be home before dark. This, of course, we acceded to, and hold our services at five instead of seven."

The missionaries, feeling it to be most important that time should test the genuineness of these professions, baptism was delayed. And as it was necessary to extend the probationary period in some cases longer than in others, the baptisms occurred at various intervals, until at length, in the course of about two years, twenty-six, out of a large number of inquirers

concerning spiritual things, had been encouraged to make a profession of their repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

At other stations the first-fruits were also being ingathered. In the early part of 1888, Wathen station witnessed the baptism of Nlemvo, Mr. Bentley's boy, and shortly after, two native girls were baptised. The first of these girls, Aku, had been brought down from near Stanley Falls by an Arab chief, to be used as ready money. Through some transaction, she came into the hands of one of the work-people at the station. Hearing of this barter, the missionary paid the man what he had given for the girl, and thus her freedom was procured. On a visit of Mrs. Bentley to England, Aku, acted as her little nurse. Sometime after her return, she became thoughtful, and eventually gave her heart to the Saviour. The other girl, Kavazwila, whose home was some distance beyond the Falls, whither the Arabs had conveyed her, Mr. Grenfell redeemed and brought her down the river. As the result of some talks Mr. Comber had with the children at Underhill, she decided to love and serve Christ, and became a happy and devoted Christian. Several were present to witness the baptism of these two native girls, amongst them being three gentlemen of the State Station, and some of the men. The Communion Service which followed in the evening of the same day was particularly sacred and blessed; four of those who were present as spectators found in the service the means of their conversion.

At Arthington Station on the Pool, too, similar encouraging events were being experienced. Through the influence of Mr. Silvey, who was stationed there, three of the native boys were constrained to give their hearts to the Saviour. The following particulars sent to this country by Mr. Silvey cannot fail to interest.

"Simbi is from the Madimba district, near San Salvador. He was one of twins, but the brother,

who was born at the same time, died. A witch palaver was held, and the nganga ngombo decided Simbi was the witch. He had caused his brother's death. The matter was allowed to lie over until Simbi was five years of age. A great palaver was called, and the people wished to put Simbi to death. His chief did not wish to lose the boy, and so paid a large sum as a ransom. Simbi became impressed



MR. SILVEY'S THREE CONGO BOYS.

during the San Salvador meetings. He has a very bad temper, and when it has hold of him, he used to lose control of himself. This has caused him to fall several times. For the last year, with the help of God, he has been able to keep it under control. We believe he has had a change of heart, and is truly following Jesus. Mr. Grenfell, Mr. Brown, Mr. Billington, and myself are satisfied as to his conversion.

“Mwema is also from San Salvador, and has been with me full three years. His heart was touched at the San Salvador meetings, and his consistent Christian life since leaves no room to doubt. He had a bad leg recently, and went to Dr. Sim’s hospital at Kintamo. A few days afterwards I saw the doctor, and told him we were sorry to give him the trouble of looking after Mwema. ‘Why,’ he said, ‘I am glad to have him; he is an influence for good among my boys; he is always speaking to one or another of them. On Sunday evening I asked him to speak to the boys after prayers; he stood up and gave a splendid testimony. I have not a shadow of doubt Mwema is savingly converted.’

“Ntoni is at present visiting his home at San Salvador, and could not be baptised yesterday. He will be baptised as soon as convenient. Ntoni is a bright little fellow. Everybody loves Ntoni, and if I wished to part with him there would be no difficulty in finding someone to take him. Ntoni has been impressed for some time, and hung back a little; but I urged him to settle the matter once for all, and I believe he has now given his heart to Jesus. When travelling on the road in the quiet of the night, I have seen Ntoni creep into a corner of the tent to pray. I asked Mr. Billington to talk with Ntoni. He, Mr. Billington, told me he was very pleased with Ntoni’s answers; but he says, ‘A little incident came under my notice the other day that speaks to me louder than words. Bafuka, my boy, was quarrelling with one of the Bateke boys in the boys’ house. Ntoni tried to stop them, but the boys were too angry to listen. Ntoni took them both by the arms, and said, “Let us pray about it;” and down on the floor all the boys knelt, while Ntoni asked God to take away the angry spirit. There was no more quarrelling that day.’ Nobody saw this, and Mr. Billington would never have known about it if his own boy had not told him.

“These boys are boys of many prayers and much personal effort. God has promised we shall reap if we faint not. To Him be all the honour and glory.”

Thus the early efforts in the pioneer days were receiving proofs of the Divine favour; God did not leave Himself without a witness, His Word was not returning unto Him void. In subsequent chapters, the progress of the spiritual work of the Mission will be recorded.





CHAPTER V.

THE WORK AMONGST THE CONGO BOYS AND GIRLS.

IT was only to be expected that the missionaries would feel the importance of bestowing much of their attention upon the welfare of the young.

They were wise in remembering that in the course of a few years the boys and girls, who might be won for Christ, would develop into useful Christian workers; and at several of the stations to-day, the religious services, the school teaching, and the evangelistic efforts, are being largely maintained by those who in early life learned to love the Saviour.

And then some of the missionaries, previous to their life on the Congo, in the home country had been especially happy in their work amongst the young, so that it was most natural that they should manifest a similar care for the poor degraded African children.

How sorely the Congo children needed the kind help of the missionary their bitter lot declares. The cruel customs which prevail are fatal to the existence of home love and joy. Owing to the lack of care in early life, a large percentage die in infancy, albeit, the mothers suppose that witchcraft is the cause of death.

In consequence of the custom of regarding children

as the property of the relatives of the wife, the father has little interest in his family. "The right of inheritance," says Mr. Bentley, in his *Life on the Congo*, "is from uncle to nephew; thus a man's slaves and real property go to the eldest son of his eldest sister, or the next-of-kin on such lines. His uncle also, knowing that his nephew is to inherit his goods, while his own children belong to his wife's clan, cares more for his nephew than his own children."

The boys at a very early age have an eye to making gains by barter. It is their aim, for instance, to possess, as soon as possible, a pig of their own, which they may be able to sell profitably at the market. They spend not a little time in hunting for rats, especially when the tall grass has been fired, and the rats are more easy to catch. Whilst they are quite small they will frequently leave their own homes to live with other and older boys in what is called a Mbonge.

The girls help on the farms and in the cooking; they, like their mothers, do most of the menial work. They are often betrothed when little children, and before their marriage the price which has been fixed upon by the girl's relatives has to be paid. Some of the girls are free girls; but most of them are slaves, and thus being the absolute property of their masters, are exposed to most cruel treatment.

It must not be supposed that the children are always unhappy. The boys at least enter with zest into their native games, and much of their time is merrily spent in swimming, fishing, and fighting sham battles.

They are naturally very superstitious, being led to believe from infancy in the powerful influence of charms, and the terrible powers of the witch doctors.

As so much of the time of the missionaries has been devoted to the Christian education of the children, it will be interesting if we give a specimen of the stories the lads tell each other as they sit at night around their fires. We are indebted to Mr.

Darby of Lukolela for the following rendering of one of their stories :—

“THE LEOPARD, THE DOG, AND THE TORTOISE.

“A dog and a leopard lived near together in the forest. Each had his own hole in the ground, and in it he lived. One day the leopard gave birth to ten children. The dog came to see them, and the leopard said to him, ‘Hey! Mister Dog! You stop here and watch my children while I go and hunt some food for them. When I come back, if I find that you have taken good care of my family, I will give you a piece of meat for yourself.’ ‘All right,’ said the dog. The leopard had scarcely got hidden among the trees when a tortoise came along. ‘Hello, dog!’ said he, ‘how are you to-day, and what are you doing here?’ ‘Oh,’ said the dog, ‘the leopard has gone out to hunt, and he has left me to watch his children, and when he returns he is going to give me some meat.’ ‘I say, dog,’ said the tortoise, ‘it is no use waiting until the leopard returns; bring out one of those young leopards and let us kill and eat it.’ ‘I dare not,’ said the dog; ‘when the leopard returns and finds one of his children missing he will immediately kill me.’ ‘Oh, never mind the leopard,’ said the tortoise, ‘he can’t count, and the young leopards are all alike, he does not know one from the other, so can’t tell if one is missing.’ At last the dog brought forth one of the young leopards, killed it, and he and the tortoise ate it. In the evening the leopard returned when it was dark. ‘Well, dog,’ said he, ‘are the children all safe?’ ‘Oh, yes,’ said the dog. ‘Very well, then, come and let us have some supper.’ Next day the leopard again went in search of food and left the dog in charge of his family. The tortoise came again as before, and another young leopard was eaten. So it went on for five days, and only five of the young leopards were left. At the end of the fifth day, when the leopard returned, he said,

'Dog, are the children all safe?' 'Yes,' said the dog. 'Let me see them!' The dog began to tremble, but, acting on the advice of the tortoise, he brought out one young leopard at a time, and then returned it to the hole before bringing out another. In this way he made it appear as if there were ten young leopards. The leopard was satisfied. They ate their suppers and went to bed. Next day the leopard went off hunting again, and again the tortoise came up begging for another young leopard. The dog was afraid, and told him how the leopard had counted the children the day before. The tortoise said that it was very easy to deceive a leopard. All he had to do was to trust to him (the tortoise) and he would see that all was right. So they ate another young leopard. At last only one of the family remained. 'Dog,' said the leopard, 'my heart yearns for my family; let me see them one by one.' So the dog went to the hole and brought out the young leopard and showed it to its mother. Then he carried it back into the hole and brought it back again. This he did ten times, so making the leopard believe that all her family remained in the hole.

"Next day the tortoise came again, and he and the dog ate the last of the young leopards. 'Now, dog,' said the tortoise, 'when the leopard asks you how many children he has, you tell him, None. If he says, Where are they? Tell him that you and I have eaten them, and then run off as hard as you can to the towns, and live among the people there, for they like dogs, but always try to kill leopards.'

"In the evening, when the leopard came home and asked the usual questions, the dog replied as the tortoise had instructed him. Then the leopard became very angry, and ran after the dog as fast as he could, and the dog also ran as fast as he could until he reached the town. When the people saw him, they said, 'Hello dog, have you come to live with us? That is good! Abide here always.' Just

then they heard a noise in the forest, and, looking around, they saw the leopard. They immediately got their guns and spears and drove him off. He returned and told all his brother leopards, and from that day to this, whenever a leopard can carry off and eat a dog,* he does so in order to revenge the death of his young kinsfolk."

The first school opened for these Congo boys was, of course, at San Salvador. When the missionaries had succeeded in overcoming their shyness, and established a feeling of friendship, the boys were most eager to be taught. They watched for every opportunity that arose, they followed the missionaries about, and were disappointed when no school could be held. By their kindness and interest in them, the missionaries gained such an influence over them that there was nothing the boys would not do to be in their company. No wonder that a considerable school was soon established, and that as the mission developed, and other stations were planted, school work should grow to be one of the most important factors.

The boys are represented as remarkably quick in learning, being by no means dull and stupid. When it is borne in mind that they were without any literature, without indeed a formulated language, the rapid progress many of the lads have made in reading, writing, and arithmetic, indicates most promising intellectual ability, so that there is good reason to believe that as Congo-land advances in civilisation, the Congo natives will be quite equal in mental capacity and attainment to the requirements of their improved lot.

It must not be thought that the boys are induced to come to the schools by reason of bribes. When they do come from a distance, it is found necessary

* The natives say among themselves that leopards prefer dog flesh to that of any other animal.

to provide them with the means of subsistence, but this being of the most frugal character is inexpensive, and in most cases is provided by the special offerings of Sunday schools in England. When, however, the friends of the boys live at or near a station, such supplies are not allowed.

The accompanying picture represents a midsummer treat at the Bopoto Station—one thousand miles from the coast—which, with the Christmas entertainments, are the only inducements given to secure attendance at school.

The late Mrs. Cameron, just before her death, sent to the Mission House in London the following account of the way in which Christmas had been spent at Ngombe or Wathen Station on the lower river. "About half-past seven in the morning my husband called all the boys and workmen together, and I gave each boy a shirt and waistcloth, the men a cloth and handkerchief. The girls and women on the station got each a dress. In this way we clothed in all about a hundred and twenty. At eight o'clock a service was held. Afterwards the children amused themselves as they liked, many of them going into the house of Mr. Davies, others coming into ours, playing with toys and looking at picture-books, etc.

"About half-past one the great event of the day took place. This consisted of races, jumping, tug-of-war, and scramble.

"Mr. Davies and my husband were the judges, and awarded the prizes to those who had won them. These lasted for about two hours, and the children were glad of a rest after their exertions.

"About five o'clock we began to share out the *pig*, which constitutes to the Congo mind a feast. No festival is complete without a pig.

"We also used during the day ten gallons of lemonade, and a large number of pine-apples. We left the children enjoying their feast, and went to get our house ready for the evening's entertainment.



SCHOOLBOYS' MIDSUMMER TREAT, BOPOTO.

"Outside the house we had a number of Chinese lanterns, which, when lit, gave quite a bright light all around.

"About half-past seven the children came to the house, and we had a magic-lantern entertainment; the subject was 'The Pilgrim's Progress.' I exhibited the views, and my husband explained them. The children listened most attentively, and seemed to enjoy the views very much. When this was over, a large tin trunk was brought out, which contained a present for each child, with its name written on the paper which was wrapped round it. I wish you who have so kindly sent toys to me could have seen the children's faces when they opened their parcels. You would indeed have been glad you sent the toys to make these children happy; but I'm afraid the noise they made when they began blowing trumpets, etc., would almost have frightened you away. At last we said good-night, and before very long all the children were fast asleep, most of them having been up since five o'clock in the morning. We all spent a very happy day."

At this particular station, Wathen, the facilities for imparting instruction to the young have been greatly extended by means of a generous gift of a school-house from the late Sir Charles Wathen, after whom the station has been named. This building is thirty-six feet wide by eighty feet long, being equally divided into a school-room and dormitory. The structure is admirably arranged with a view to good sanitary conditions. The dormitory has accommodation for one hundred and twenty boys; at the present time, the attendance at the school is about one hundred, including a small number of girls, who are under Mrs. Bentley's care. The largest girls' school is at San Salvador, which Mrs. Lewis superintends.

And not only is the educational progress of the Congo boys a cause for much encouragement; but by their devotion, their fidelity, their tenderness in times



TWO LUKOLEIA BOYS.

[p. 60.]

of sickness, they have endeavoured gratefully to repay the kindly interest the missionaries have taken in their welfare.

The aptitude which has been shown by these boys in the various industries taught them, will find more fitting reference in a subsequent chapter.

A large part of this volume might be filled with deeply interesting accounts of the personal history, the conversion and Christian character of these Congo scholars. We cannot more appropriately conclude this chapter than by giving a description of the Lukolela lads, whose portraits, taken by Mr. Darby, are seen in the illustration on page 59.

The one on the right dressed in white is Bateku. He was Mr. Richard's boy. "I was born," he himself says, "in a town, far away inland, many, many miles from this place. I do not know its name. There were many people there, and they were always fighting with the neighbouring towns. It was in one of these fights that I was captured and made a slave. The people who captured me brought me a long way from my town and parents, though I do not now remember my father or mother. These people (my captors) sold me to some other people. They cut some of these marks that are on my body. After living here some time I was again sold and carried to the River Lulanga. Here they put *their* marks on my body. While living here Diwoko (his present master) came and bought me; he brought me to Lokoele. The people here cut these marks on my forehead. After awhile the white men came, and now I have come to live at their town."

The other boy on the left is Mr. Darby's personal boy. His native name is Latumba, though he is called "Jack." Let him tell his own story:—"I was born far away inland at a town called Likuba. It is many days' journey from here. There is no large river there. The people are all very poor. Everybody wears the native grass cloth. They have no

white man's cloth. I remember both my father and mother, and if I were to see them I think I should know them. One day some people came from another town to fight us. My people were obliged to run away. My mother left me on the ground and ran away with the rest. I and several other little children and a number of women were captured and made slaves. They brought me a long way from my home and sold me. I lived here a long time. Some people came from the Lulanga to trade, and I was sold to them and carried to their town. After living here some time I was again sold. This time Eyoka's wife bought me, and I was brought to Lokoele. (Eyoka is one of the big chiefs at Lokoele.)"

"How much did you cost, Jack?" Mr. Darby continues.

"Soko!" (perhaps), he replied.

"Perhaps ten brass rods?" (about 6d.)

"Perhaps! I don't know."

"I do not think the elder of the two is more than nine years old."





CHAPTER VI.

LITERARY LABOURS.

ONE of the peculiar characteristics of the Congo as a mission field, was the important consideration of its language not being available to the missionaries in any reduced, literary form. Upon the pioneers, therefore, devolved the immensely difficult task of collecting words with a view to the compilation of a Dictionary, and for the purposes of translation, of the still further duty of constructing a grammar on sound principles and rules. But as in other missions, so in this Congo Mission, the Divine Providence is conspicuously seen in supplying the workman to accomplish the work required to be done. To Mr. W. Holman Bentley belongs the great honour of having been called to fill the high position of Philologist and Translator in connection with this particular African Mission—a position gratefully and unanimously recognised by his fellow-missionaries.

At the outset Mr. Bentley was absolutely without the use of any vocabularies with the exception of some fifty words which Mr. Comber and Mr. Grenfell had picked up on their preliminary expedition. The

most helpful work to which he had recourse was Bishop Steere's Handbook of Swahili, which enabled him to gain some idea of a language in certain respects similar to that of the Congo. After he had proceeded some way with his task, he was glad to become acquainted with a translation by Mr. H. Grattan Guinness of a Latin work, discovered in the British Museum, containing some rules for the more easy understanding of the most difficult idioms of the people of the Congo, written by a Roman Catholic Prefect in 1659. A small grammar also, which Mr. Guinness published subsequently, of the dialect spoken at Mpalabala, supplied some fifty words.

In entering upon this tremendous undertaking, Mr. Bentley was almost entirely dependent upon the workmen, the carriers, and especially upon the children. With the children he was, therefore, constantly in contact, often playing with them at their games, ever ready to note down any new words he might happen to hear. In the evenings he would discuss with his colleagues the additions made to his stock. As his own knowledge of the language and facility for speaking it grew, he was, of course, able to take the opinion of the natives so as to correct his mistakes.

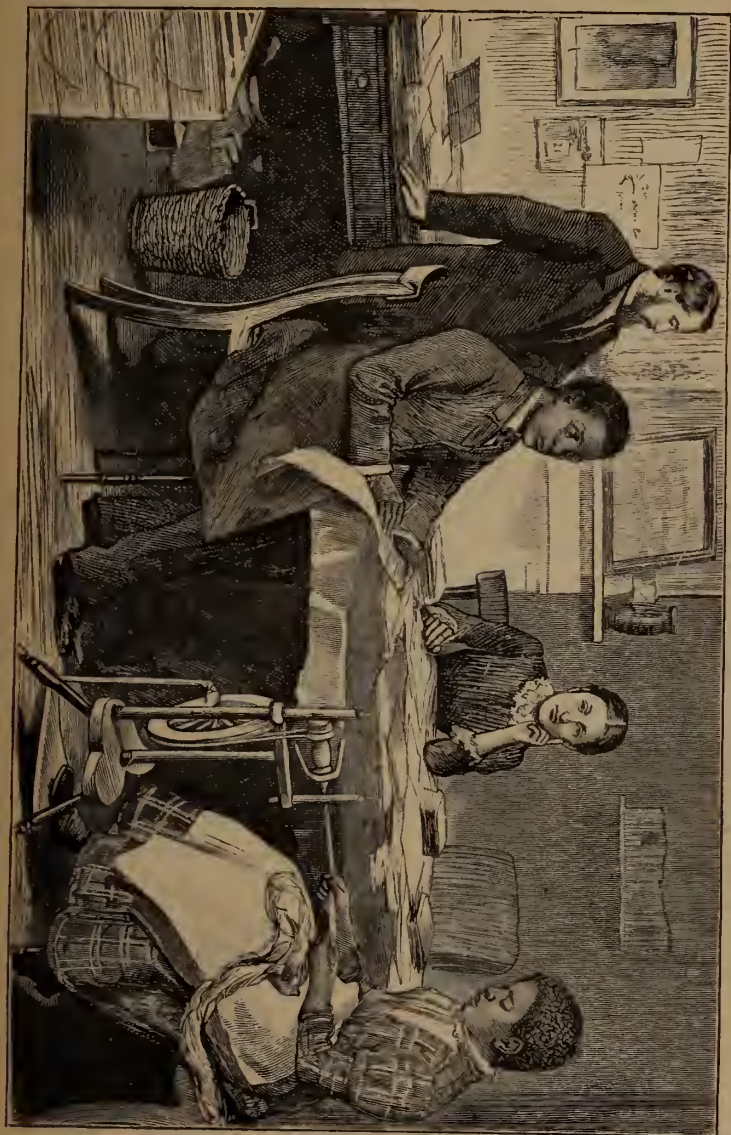
The study of the language was necessarily much interfered with by the itinerating required for establishing the new stations. "It was very difficult," says Mr. Bentley, "to find time to record the words acquired and make the necessary corrections. Now and then we had opportunities for taking down some fire-side stories, and this folk-lore gave us new words. We were too busy to study, classify, or enter the words; but our careful notes and rough memoranda were treasured up, and whenever a little leisure could be found, the attempt was made to lessen the ever-growing bundle of papers."

A large stock of material having been thus accumulated Mr. Bentley returned to England to set about its

preparation for the press, bringing with him a lad named Nlemvo, who had been taught in the school at Salvador. This was in the year 1884. "On arriving in this country," to quote again Mr. Bentley's own words, "it was found that there was much more to be done with the chaotic manuscript which I had brought home with me than we at first expected. Prepositions, pronouns, adverbs, and conjunctions seemed to be used indiscriminately; Vo, for instance, standing for 'on, off, from, there, when, after, thither, if, etc.' It was clear that more time and thought were necessary to solve these difficulties, and find out the rules by which things worked. This was done by making up English sentences, in which the English adverbs, conjunctions, etc., were used in every conceivable way, and then translating these into Congo. Bishop Steere's and other vocabularies were again searched for special phases of action and ideas, which should form their counterpart in Congo, and so things began to take a more definite form. Finally, in writing out for the printers, Mr. Kölbe's 'Herero Dictionary' was before me, lest any shade of idea of English verbs, simple or compound with prepositions, such as 'to come' or 'to come in crowds,' etc., should have escaped my attention. Even at this stage, new words were constantly cropping up, and, wherever possible, inserted into the proofs that were under correction. My work was growing larger than I had ever expected. Instead of being simply a clear transcription of the material brought home with me, the end of the work seemed ever receding. I had hoped and expected to keep my printers well supplied with copy as the transcriptions progressed, but the correction of the proofs revealed errors, and sometimes also fresh niceties of thought, which required a great deal of time to formulate correctly.

"As the proofs of the English-Congo section came in from the printers, I sent them to a friend, to be written for the reversed section of Congo into English.

MR. AND MRS. HOLMAN BENTLEY AND THEIR CONGO ASSISTANTS.



He wrote each word, as it appeared, with its English equivalent on a separate slip of paper. As he sent in his slips from time to time, they were sorted into alphabetical order, according to the Congo word on each slip. Later corrections or additions were also written on slips and sorted in, so that finally every usage of a word, any corrections made, were found together in its alphabetical order. In this way not only the type was corrected, but the mistakes were eliminated from the second section. These reversal slips, eventually numbering 25,000, being kept in trays and measuring between nine and ten feet in thickness. As fast as the type was set up, the writing and sorting of these slips progressed; and when the first section was finished and the last slip written, the work of revising them for the press began. All the slips containing one particular Congo word were examined, and the different translations grouped and written under one heading."

Whilst this important and careful work was proceeding Mr. Bentley's eyesight for a time seriously failed him, insomuch that it was impossible for him to continue his labours; but Mrs. Bentley, who had been rendering him most valuable assistance, understood the principles upon which the work was conducted, and so was able, under his direction, to carry on the undertaking. The picture we are able to give shows Mr. and Mrs. Bentley with Nlemvo at work, the girl upon the right being a native who had been brought down from the upper Congo.

It should be mentioned here that Mr. Bentley and his colleagues ever felt grateful that they were led in the first instance to San Salvador, the Congo language as spoken in that old capital being far superior to dialects used elsewhere and being understood over a wider area.

It must be especially remembered that in all this arduous labour of collecting words, reducing them to dictionary and grammar, Mr. Bentley had ever kept

steadfastly before him the great object which all such labour was intended to promote—viz., the translation of the Scriptures. He consequently felt that the greatest care and thoroughness were required.

In the September of 1886, Mr. Bentley was again in Africa, and in the following year, his most valuable work, under the title of "Dictionary and Grammar of the Congo Language" appeared, dedicated by special permission to His Majesty, Leopold II., King of the Belgians and Sovereign of the Congo Free State, who, in acknowledging the presentation copy, described the volume as "this noble contribution to the progress and development of civilisation in Central Africa and the material improvement and uplifting of the Congo people."

In the introduction to the volume, consisting, it may be stated, of over 700 pages, Dr. Cust, the Honorary Secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society, thus writes:—"It is for the purpose of advancing the Kingdom of the Lord that this great work has been commenced, continued, and completed. It is a solid brick in the great edifice of the evangelisation of Africa, for, how can they hear unless they are spoken to? How can they be spoken to unless the missionary masters the vulgar tongue of the people to whom he is sent? Mr. Bentley has concentrated his great talents to this noble work in the hope that it will enable his colleagues, and those who come after him, to spread the Gospel of Christ. This was his main object, and for this purpose only, the funds of a Missionary Society can be properly devoted to the expense of such publications.

"But the scholars of Europe and North America would indeed be dead to all feeling, did they not feel gratitude to missionaries like Mr. Bentley, who have revealed to them new worlds, and helped them to enter in, and admire the beauties of hitherto sealed gardens. The Congo language takes its place, by the side of the Swahili, the Zulu, and the Pongwe, as one of

the typical languages of the Bantu family. Differing from each other in many particulars, they still have such ineffaceable affinities as indicate their common stock. The mechanism of one often explains misunderstood anomalies in the others. Mr. Bentley has been able to get to the bottom of many knotty points, which will, no doubt, throw a reflected light on unexplained features in sister languages, of which the study is only now commencing."

About two years ago this work was rendered still more valuable by the addition of an appendix containing about 3000 new words.

As to other literary productions, for use in the schools in San Salvador and the lower river stations, where the Congo language is spoken, Mrs. Bentley has translated "The Congo Primer," a book of Arithmetic, in three parts, "More about Jesus," and a Bible History. Nlemvo has contributed a translation of "The Peep of Day," whilst Mr. Weeks has translated several of the Psalms and some elementary school-books as well as issued a Congo Hymn-Book.

But the great want of the Mission was ever kept in view. To supply that want was the purpose for which the dictionary and grammar had been prepared—viz., the translation of the Scriptures into the vernacular. The publication of Mr. Bentley's work rapidly facilitated the issue of portions of the Bible; Mr. Weeks translating the Gospel of Matthew, Mr. Cameron the Gospel of Mark, whilst Mr. Bentley himself not only supplied in separate issues the Gospels of Luke and John, but actually carried on his translation work with such success that in March, 1893, he rendered into Congo all the rest of the books of the New Testament; and having completed this second great achievement on behalf of the Congo Mission, the sheets of the entire New Testament were sent to the press, the British and Foreign Bible Society defraying the expense of printing.

But these literary results to which we have so far referred, concern only the stations at San Salvador, and those on the Lower Congo, Underhill and Wathen ; though it is doubtless true that the dictionary and grammar will be of real service in regions where other languages than that of the Congo proper are spoken.

But not a little progress has been made in the other four languages prevailing in different parts of the Congo mission field.

At Bolobo, the first station above the Pool, Messrs. Darby and Glennie have collected considerable material for a dictionary of the Bobangi language.

At Lukolela, Mr. Scrivener has rendered into the same language the Gospel of Matthew, a book of Bible stories, and the first part of "Line upon Line;" whilst Mr. Clark has issued a short life of Abraham ; and Lusala, the native assistant, "More about Jesus." A hymn-book and a school-book by Mr. Whitehead have also been published, and still more recently the Gospel of Mark by Mr. Whitehead and Mr. Clark conjointly.

At Monsembi, a knowledge of the language spoken by the Bangala : the Ja-Bonsembi, is being mastered, and a few hymns, some simple Gospel stories, and a school primer have already been passed through the press by Messrs. Weeks and Stapleton.

At Bopoto, the most distant station, thousands of words of the spoken language, the Ja-Upoto, have been collected, and a school reading book, some Scripture lessons and several hymns have been published.

It is cause for wonder and thankfulness that such substantial progress should have been made in so comparatively short a period, to supply the natives with educational and sacred literature. And there is every prospect that still further invaluable contributions will be made to this essentially important part of the missionary enterprise.

It should be stated here that in these literary labours the "Hannah Wade" Press, the gift of a friend at Halifax, and which is under the superintendence of Mr. Scrivener and Mr. Whitehead, and which is located at Lukolela has been of the greatest utility. By a recent additional present of plant, the printing demands of the Congo Mission, and of other missions on the Upper River can be fully met. It may be mentioned in closing this chapter that at the recent Exhibition in Antwerp, the specimens of the Lukolela printing which were then on view called forth general admiration.





CHAPTER VII.

THE SERVICES OF THE MISSION TO CIVILISATION AND PHILANTHROPY.

THE presence of a Christian missionary amongst a degraded, heathen people, necessarily makes for the improvement of the conditions of life.

His influence is humanising and ameliorating. As the Divine Father sent the Divine Son into the world, even so hath the Son sent His servants into the world to preach the Gospel to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, and to set at liberty them that are bruised—and this not alone in the higher, the spiritual sense, but to a large extent also physically and materially. Testimonies from men high in station and authority, well qualified to judge, might be multiplied a hundred fold, who have borne unsolicited witness to the temporal benefits resulting from Christian missions.

The Congo, in this respect, is no exception to other mission fields. The gathering together of the children in Christian schools for instruction in the elements of education is bound to have its good effect upon the general community. Already, not a

few of the boys, having entered upon manhood, have come to realise that knowledge is power, and because of the religious training they have received are using their power for the advantage of others as well as of themselves.

The pioneer nature of the Mission, necessitating the founding of stations, the building of houses and other structures, the cultivation of the land, and general station work, has given the missionaries abundant opportunity to teach the natives many useful arts. The Congo Mission is not entitled "An Industrial Mission," but no mission bearing that name ever rendered more real service in this direction. Most of the missionaries, knowing well how to use their hands themselves, have not been slow to teach the boys and young men at their stations to do the same. And just as many of the natives have shown remarkable aptitude in book learning, so they have also become expert in carpentry, in brick-making and building, in printing and in agricultural pursuits.

It is interesting to note in this connection that when a telegraphic apparatus—the gift of two friends—was set up at Wathen station, one of the boys soon mastered the working of the Morse code. Writing to the kind donors, Mr. Bentley said: "The apparatus has been set up, and is in full work. My two colleagues, who are with me here, are both able to use it, having been used to such work when in England. I am making good progress myself, and some of the senior boys are taking lessons." The governor-general of the State, visiting Wathen, was much pleased to inspect this the first telegraph line on the Congo. He thought it a capital idea. When the Congo Railway shall be completed, telegraph clerks, remarks Mr. Bentley, will be needed, and some of the boys may find good openings.

The medical knowledge possessed by the missionaries is a most important civilising and humanising influence. Apart from the unique advantage it gives

to the missionary as the minister of healing mercy, thus winning the confidence of the natives, and disposing them to listen to the Gospel message; in itself, the practice of medical skill necessarily undermines the power of the witch-doctor, whose terrible influence over the people is as evil as it is widespread. Very often in their journeyings have the missionaries come into contact with the "medicine man," their hearts being deeply saddened, and their righteous indignation aroused by the awful cruelties they have witnessed. Mr. Stapleton, referring to the fact that the natives never admit that sickness comes naturally, but is always ascribed to the occult influence of witches, tells of a chief who was brought home from a trading expedition very sick, and carried into his hut to die. Rumours having been spread about that he was being bewitched, the missionaries went to see him. They found a large group of men holding solemn debate, the son of the chief presiding. As the result, it was decided that five people must take the "Nkasa" (the test poison). Two days after, a man and a woman who had undergone the ordeal were said to be dying. Instantly Mr. Stapleton took the bottle of sulphate of zinc, while Mr. White took a jug of water, and started off to the town. On arriving, they at once heard the cry of mourning women, and hastening to the hut whence the cries proceeded, they found it full of howling women gathered round a dying man. Entrance into the hut was refused them. In answer to their reiterated cry, "Will you let us save him?" they got the heartless reply, "He is old and no more good; let him die." Mr. Grenfell, who had followed, arriving on the scene, in stirring tones told the villainous son that he was guilty of murder, that he had rendered himself liable to death at the hands of the State authorities, and that he must answer to God for his crime. Mr. Grenfell's vigorous protest was not without good effect. Though the woman, the old man's sister, died of the poison, a further effort was

made to reach the old man himself, and with success. He expressed a wish that the missionaries should do their best for him. God blessed the means that were used, and the man recovered. This successful treatment dealt a heavy blow at the dreadful "Nkasa" custom. The late Dr. S. R. Webb, the qualified medical missionary of the Society, was hopeful that as the people came to know more of the use of medicines as administered by the Mission, they would lose their faith in witchcraft and in magic.

Another horrible custom extensively prevailing is that of burying the living with the dead. The greater the position of the chief the larger the number of attendants required to accompany him in the long last journey. The sacrifice of human life caused by this superstition is revolting in the extreme. Take as a specimen the instance given of one of the wives of a comparatively young man being made to sit in the grave and support the corpse on her knees, then being buried alive with it, and this after the heads of four unfortunate individuals had been cut off, and all to testify respect for the dead, and to gratify the public taste for a spectacle.

Earnest efforts are continually being made by the missionaries to bring this abomination to an end.

The picture given opposite illustrates a "palaver" of Bolobo chiefs which took place in the yard of the Mission Station, when the Commissaire of the District, the Free State authority in that part, was also present, to consider what could be done to put a stop to this cruel burial practice.

The late Mr. Michael Richard gives a graphic account of a visit he paid to a town where a chief had died and the obsequies were about to be observed in the usual fiendish manner. Let the story be told in his own words:—

"I went into the towns not knowing what had taken place. Everybody was preparing for something great by either eating their full, decorating

their bodies, adjusting gaudy pieces of European cloth, or 'trying on' hats of feathers, etc. 'My friends, why all this preparation?' I asked. 'The father of Mbuma Njokup is dead, and to-day we dance and cry.' I approached this chief's house with caution, knowing the people think white men are witches.

"What a sight! the like of which I had never



BOLOBO CHIEFS ASSEMBLED FOR PALAVER.

before seen. Women yelling, with only a few leaves around their waist. Some rolling in the dirt, others sitting around an artificial arm-chair. Many had put charcoal on their faces and breasts, over which a little water had been sprinkled, to represent tears. The dead man was seated in the arm-chair—chalked all over, and spotted with black, yellow, and blue; on his arms long brass bracelets, on either side of him a

flintlock gun, on his head a large cap of feathers—leaning back a little, like a gentleman at ease before his drawing-room fire. The women asked why I had come. I speedily told them. They were pleased, and invited me to a seat. Just what I was waiting for, and I was soon on the piece of burned stick. People asked if we white men could give medicine to raise the dead. 'No; but we can give medicine to sick folk that may keep them from dying, and, if you wish it, I will come in the morning.'

"The chief now came up, but he was too busy for many words. But something said 'Speak to him.' I waited my opportunity, then called him aside, and asked if any heads were going to be cut off. We had a short conversation, when he turned to the mourners(?), repeating what I had said. Silently the people looked at me, expecting further words; and, for the first time, I addressed the people of Lukolela, finishing by asking them to bury the dead without heads being cut off. The chief replied: 'No person shall be killed. The white man's words are good.' I looked at two women lying nearest the dead man. The chief saw my eyes fixed upon them, and said: 'You need not look at them, they are only crying. Have I not said no one shall be killed? Look at the people, and come to-morrow; you will then see if I tell the truth or not.'

"Soon after this dancing began, drums were beaten, and from every town came crowds of men, women, and children, clothed with skulls, branches of trees, old baskets, fetishes, etc., etc. They joined together and raced about like mad folk, shaking rattles, beating drums, waving fetishes, and twisting and turning themselves into all manner of shapes. Every now and then the five hundred got as close as possible together, and sang a song lustily. The din I leave you to imagine.

"I went to the towns the next morning and doctored fifteen persons. The people kept their

promise, and I have certain reason to know 'no person accompanied the dead one on his long journey.'"

Instances might be multiplied of missionaries interviewing chiefs on the occasion of a death, and by their influence preventing these murders being committed. And as through their teaching a public sentiment against this cruel superstition shall be



A SLAVE, BANGALA TRIBE.

created, it will become eventually as much a thing of the past in Congo land, as child drowning or widow burning is unknown in India to-day.

In this chapter it is fitting that some reference should be made to slavery—Africa's open sore, as Livingstone described it—the source of so much untold wrong and woe. In any consideration of this great question the distinction should ever be borne in mind between

the slave trade and domestic slavery ; and yet, though the former is far more oppressive and inhuman than the latter, in both alike there is the disregard of the inalienable right of man, the right to enjoy personal liberty. The slave is not permitted to look upon himself as in any sense his own property ; he has no right of possession in his own wife, or children, or goods. Now the interest of the Christian missionary cannot but tell, and tell powerfully, against even the domestic slavery. The example of his own home life as well as the inculcation of the principles of the Gospel, must necessarily tend to bring to an end this ownership of human beings.

It is, however, the abominations of the slave trade, the merchandise in human flesh, that provoke the deepest indignation and command the most determined effort. No missionary can reside long in Africa without being compelled to witness slavery's dreadful ravages. "I have seen," says Mr. Grenfell, "thousands of poor refugees afloat on the river in their canoes, having been driven from their homes by ruthless slave raiders, who have carried off their wives and children. In one single day I counted as many as twenty-seven burning villages destroyed by the Arabs, and who can tell the sum of misery and crime such a fact involves? The mere thought of it weighs our hearts down to the ground."

It is satisfactory to know that the article in the General Act of the Berlin Conference, dealing with the slave trade, is most emphatic on its prohibition. It reads as follows : "In conformity with the principles of the right of nations as recognised by the signatory Powers, the slave trade being forbidden, and operations which on land or sea supply slaves for the trade being equally held to be forbidden, the Powers which exercise or will exercise rights of sovereignty or influence in the territories forming the basin of the Congo, declare that these territories shall serve neither for the place of sale nor the way of transit for the traffic

in slaves of any race whatsoever. Each of the Powers undertakes to employ every means that it can to put an end to the trade, and to punish those who engage in it."

It is very certain that the Congo Mission, as other missions, will render all possible service to give effect to this most important declaration.

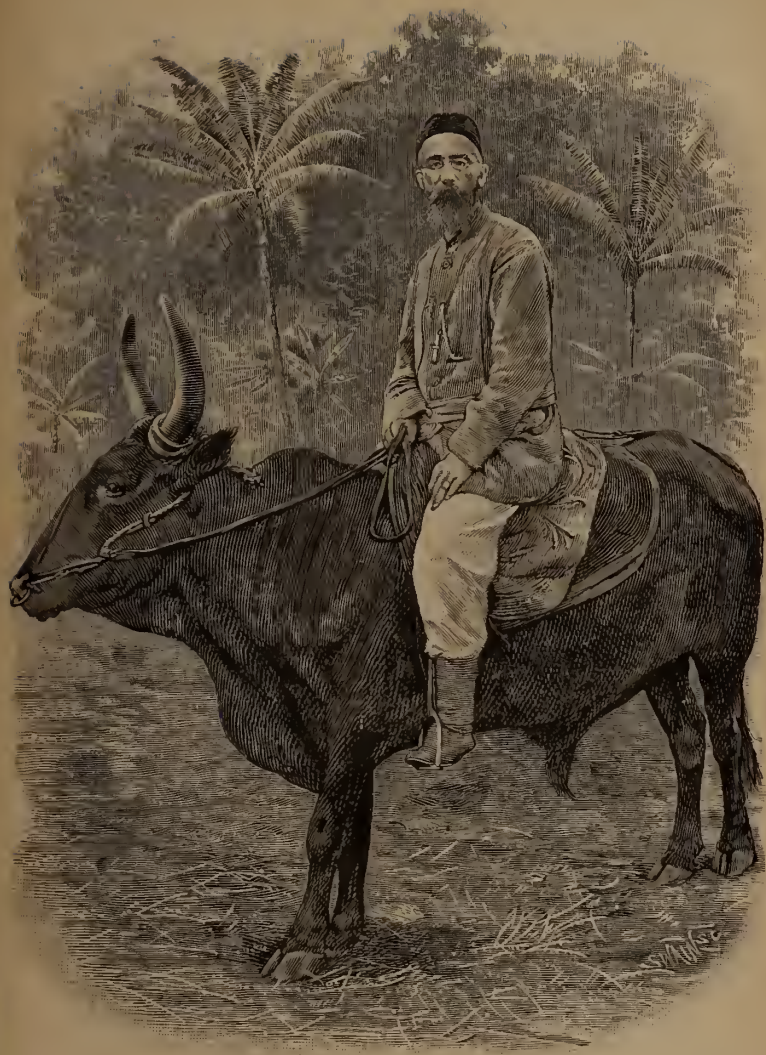
In the early part of 1892, the Committee of the Society received a very earnest request from His Majesty, King Leopold, that Mr. Grenfell should be permitted to undertake certain difficult duties in connection with the delimitation of the Southern Frontier of the Free State. The fact of this request being made was in itself a high testimony to the value set upon Mr. Grenfell's judgment and abilities, but in granting it the Committee took into their consideration the bearing which the undertaking, if successful, would have upon the slave trade. The commission was one of great delicacy, but the missionary plenipotentiary was equal to the position. The satisfactory terms upon which the delimitation of the boundary was settled, secured immense benefit to a population occupying some 20,000 square miles, who hitherto have been subject to raids systematically carried on for the levying of blackmail and for the capture of slaves. The duties of the commission extended over a period of more than a year, long distances having to be traversed. In all these journeyings Mr. Grenfell was accompanied by Mrs. Grenfell; over a thousand miles had to be accomplished in the mode of travelling depicted in the illustrations given on the next page. But whilst the commissioner successfully fulfilled his difficult task, and had had opportunities of making known the Gospel in regions where no missionary had ever previously been, he was thankful when his duties for the State were over, and he found himself once more at his mission station, able to devote all his time and energies to direct missionary work.

It may be stated here that the King of the Belgians signified his approbation of the manner in which Mr. Grenfell had discharged the service in the most gracious and commendatory terms. And it may be also stated that the Mission was financially compensated for the temporary absence of their missionary from his work.



MRS. GRENFELL ON BULL-BACK.

A further most valuable service the Congo Mission has rendered to the cause of civilisation, consists in important geographical discoveries. When so excellent a steamer as the *Peace* for navigating the Congo river was provided, it was only to be expected that new tributaries and new territories would be explored. The fact that in making the acquaintance of



THE REV. GEORGE GRENFELL—A NEW MODE OF TRAVELLING ON THE CONGO.

the Upper Congo region and in prospecting for new mission sites, Mr. Grenfell was in command of the *Peace*, was certain to issue in results especially interesting to members of geographical societies. As far back as 1887 the *Peace* had made no less than seven considerable journeys, traversing nearly the whole of the 5000 miles at that time known to be navigable. During these journeys some doubtful points of previous travellers were cleared up, whilst in two and three cases new waterways were explored.

But the discovery which will ever place Mr. Grenfell amongst the great African explorers is that of the Mobangi river.

When the fact of this discovery was announced in England in July, 1885, the *Times* newspaper declared that since the discovery of the course of the Congo itself no more important addition had been made to our knowledge of the hydrography of the region; that the details which had come to hand showed what an admirable piece of exploring work Mr. Grenfell had done, as he had proved that the Mobangi, which enters the right bank of the Congo, forming a great delta between 26° and 42° S. latitude, nearly opposite Equator Station, is probably its greatest tributary; that the river banks are far more populous than any equal length of the Congo. The *Times* further affirmed that the commercial importance of Mr. Grenfell's discovery could not be exaggerated, that whether the Mobangi be the Welle or not it must form an important link between the basin of the Congo and the basins of the Niger, the Shari, and the Nile.

This contribution to geographical knowledge being deemed so important, the account of the discovery sent to the Mission House will be of sufficient interest to reproduce in these pages. Having described the previous part of his journey, Mr. Grenfell writes:—

“We now commenced to look out for the mouth of the Mobangi river, but as we maintained a course of

N. by E. and N.N.E., which corresponded with that of the Congo, we thought that 'Mai Mobangi' was just a name given, as in other places, to a particular portion of the main stream, and that we were still on the Congo itself. It was not till we had journeyed nearly 130 miles up the Mobangi that we made sure of its independence. Its islands were so numerous, and the points of the mainland (as they afterwards proved themselves to be) appeared, as we caught glimpses of them here and there between the islands, so much like the heads of other islands, and the course was so nearly identical with the Congo, that I did not determine the question till I was farther north than the point ($1^{\circ} 10'$ N.L.) where my knowledge of the right bank beyond the equator commenced. On the 4th November the sun's meridian altitude put us in $1^{\circ} 6'$ N., and we then knew that if we were on the Congo we should reach Lobengo that afternoon; but, as no Lobengo came in sight, we anchored that evening, certain of being on the Mobangi.

"The next morning, soon after we started, we saw towns to the eastward, and were then sure we saw the opposite bank, and determined to go across, hoping to get on better in returning on that side than we had succeeded in doing on the one by which we had ascended, for it was only at one or two places that we had been able to open communications with the people. Our approach was generally the signal for a stampede. Cooking-pots were left simmering on the fire, houses all open, and household gear all scattered about; and, together with the astonished goats and fowls, at our mercy. In several places little children were left behind to face the fate the older folk all feared. In other places, again, the bolder spirits set about putting their stockades in a proper state of defence (all the towns hereabouts are fortified), while others stood behind holding their own and their comrades' weapons and shields. At one

town the medicine-man began to make his charms to ward off the expected evil by tying the long grass into peculiar knots; and as we steamed slowly on, trying to get him to speak (he was the only man we saw in a large town), he kept just ahead of us, dodging behind the bushes till he had completed his 'bonganga' (medicine) defences covering the whole river frontage of the town, and then he darted off to join his people, and, I've no doubt, to make a big dance and sing his own praises for having, single-handed, warded off the attack of the white men and his big fiery monster whose breath was as the beating of war-drums.

"At one town we were greeted from behind the stockade with shouts of 'Bedimo! bedimo!' (spirits). But although one of their countrymen whom we found at Lukolela, and brought with us, assured them that we were not spirits, and that we went to bed and slept like ordinary people (of course, spirits never sleep), we could not overcome their prejudice, and, short of food as we were, had to go empty away. It now remained to see if the people on the left bank were more tractable; but on our crossing the river and approaching the first town the people all fled. We could see plenty of food about, and as it was imperative that we should get something to eat, we were not prepared to give up our quest at the first rebuff. Three of our people volunteered to go ashore, and try to talk to the people, who evidently had not gone far. We, therefore, put the steamer close into the beach and landed our ambassadors, who took a good supply of cloth, beads, and brass wire, wherewith to open negotiations. But we had not to wait long before they came running back, retreating before an angry crowd, that received the spokesman with a spear thrust which he marvellously escaped. This was serious for hungry folk, but we were not yet willing to give up, so steamed off a short distance beyond spear throw, and waited awhile, thinking

perhaps when the people returned and found their cooking pots still on the fire, and their corn and plantain still standing, that they would be convinced of our good intentions. As we steamed off they came slowly to the beach, and we took the opportunity of displaying our bells and looking-glasses, and the trinkets the natives delight in, all with the hope of subduing them into friendliness. After awhile, thinking we might venture again to make overtures, we turned round and came in a little closer; but the warriors all began to get into their awkward, sleeveless jackets of elephant and buffalo skin, to get behind their shields, and make ready their bundles of spears, and as we came still closer they got up a war dance, and, with a terrible yell, made a charge as though they intended to come through the water to get at us. It was evident we must wait yet a little longer, and in another hour or so we tried again; but, though they were not so demonstrative (they only stood ready, and did not dance this time), we felt we could not do more than just steam slowly by, that they might the better see what manner of people we were.

“They seemed specially impressed by the presence of my wife and the children, and seemed to say among themselves: ‘Not only are there no signs of war about, but there is a woman, and there are children, and nobody takes them when they go to fight.’ A little more waiting, and another slow approach, and we managed to get the principal man to accept a fathom of cloth from the end of a long stick, and soon afterwards to make the steamer fast to one of the bushes on the bank. It was not long before they were quite assured of our harmlessness, and we were able to buy plantain and food in abundance, as well as a few of the curious jackets, shields, knives, and spears, as mementoes of the four hours’ siege we maintained and the capitulation that followed. The people in this part of the river, we

learnt, were Baloï, and quite distinct in appearance and language from both the Bakke and Bayansi, who monopolise so much of the middle Congo.

“Having replenished our food supplies, we were soon away down river again, and looking out for firewood. So much of the other bank had been under water that we had been in great straits for fuel, and had had lots of tree climbing to get it ; happily, here we found good wood, and firm ground to cut it on, and were soon able to lay in a good stock. Unfortunately, when we came to get up anchor we found it had caught in a snag, and, after a couple of hours’ hard work in trying to get it clear, we had at last to cut the chain and leave six fathoms of it together with the anchor in the bed of the river. This was a serious loss, and liable to recur, and though we had spare anchors and chain on board, we were sorry to lose even a portion of such valuable gear. The next day, after passing some suspicious people, we came to friendly towns, and were able to lay in a stock of fresh meat and fish in addition to the plantain, which had cost us so much trouble to get the day before.”

Before re-entering the Congo the *Peace* one night came into contact with a large floating island. Mr. Grenfell, awaking his crew, gave orders to get up steam, and endeavoured, but without success, to push on one side the thousand square yards of grass and herbage. The situation was critical. The men landed on the island with their hatchets to try and chop through it, but in vain ; the floating mass carried the little steamer ever onward. The hand-saws were next tried, and in ten minutes, the tough roots and stems being run through, the *Peace* was set free, having been dragged along some two miles. After anchoring in a sheltered spot, the Congo was reached the next morning without further anxiety.

Though Mr. Grenfell knew very well the important bearing of his discovery upon the great work of the

Mission, he was concerned lest the supporters of the Society at home should think that "too much fuss was being made about geography, and that he did not write enough about the Gospel." He comforted himself by the remembrance of David Livingstone's memorable words: "The end of the geographical feat is the commencement of the missionary enterprise," adding, "we shall soon have intelligent knowledge of what is really before us, and where best to concentrate our main efforts; with our present incomplete knowledge only of the vast central waterways and the populations accessible thereby, we might make great mistakes as to procedure, and spend much money and treasure in attacking outposts only, while we might with just as much ease operate against important and strategic centres."





CHAPTER VIII.

THE NATIVE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES.

THAT religious communities, consisting of individuals, once degraded, lawless savages, but now endeavouring to walk according to the pure and gentle principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, should have been brought into existence in Congo-land, is a strong argument for the supernatural origin and power of the Christian faith. And that such communities do exist, and are becoming stronger in numbers and in influence, is a fact full of encouragement and promise.

In this and the following chapters we propose to give some particulars as to the converts of whom these churches are composed, and as to their church life and work.

The first church connected with the Congo Mission was formed at

SAN SALVADOR,

in December, 1887. Five young men having been baptised, the missionaries who were then at the station—viz., Messrs. Lewis, Phillips, and Graham, had the joy of communing at the Lord's Table for

the first time with native Christians in Congo. After one of their number had explained the principles upon which a Christian Church should be founded, the right hand of fellowship was duly given, and then European white men, together with their black African brothers, commemorated the dying love of their common Lord and Saviour. The following Sabbath a Sunday school was started; a day school for boys, and Mrs. Lewis's school for girls being already in existence. Two months later Mr. Lewis reported three more baptisms, and that the work was growing more and more interesting and encouraging. No excitement or extraordinary conversions, but a quiet, deep and increasing interest in spiritual matters.

Knowing the tendency of Africans to act together in numbers, being influenced very much by one another, the missionaries felt the necessity of exercising great care to test the genuineness of their professions before admitting them into membership. And so, from time to time, down to the present, the little San Salvador Church has been increasing—slowly it may be thought, but this owing to unwillingness to baptise before full proof of change of heart has been given—until exclusive of those who have removed or have died, some sixty-eight converts are now in actual fellowship.

During the residence of Mr. Weeks at the station, and just previous to the formation of the Church, a chapel capable of holding between four and five hundred people was erected, the walls being made of bamboo palm ribs nailed perpendicularly on a wooden frame, the roof being also of bamboos and thatched with grass. The picture on page 90 shows the chapel with a group in front representing some of the boys and girls belonging to the San Salvador schools. For a view of the interior of the chapel see illustration, page 45.

The Bible-class held during the week is an important institution, the simple teaching given in the

Scripture being specially required. What with services, prayer meetings, and teaching, the time of the missionaries and that of their native Christian helpers is fully occupied.

In a further chapter reference will be made to the evangelistic efforts of the San Salvador Christians in their surrounding districts.

Amongst the members of the Church at this station



SOME BOYS AND GIRLS OF THE SAN SALVADOR SCHOOLS.

particular mention may be made of Don Miguel, a blacksmith, the ring of whose hammer, as he worked in his forge, might be heard all day long, his trade being mainly in agricultural hoes. This man was amongst the earliest to welcome the white men to San Salvador, and was always friendly disposed. His knowledge of Portuguese, in which language he would come and chat in the evenings, was of great service.

Miguel's simple and earnest faith in Christ was a great joy to the missionaries, and a fine example to his fellow-townsmen. Some five years ago he fell a victim to the "sleep sickness" so terribly common in Western Africa. The Church deeply mourned his loss, for by his real, earnest piety he was indeed a power for good.

Matoka, whom Mr. Comber engaged as his Portuguese interpreter on his first visit to San Salvador, and who proved particularly helpful because of the willingness of his disposition, may also be named. He, as well as Don Miguel, was one of the first five converts of whom the Church was formed. Much satisfaction has been and is still felt in the consistency of Matoka's Christian character. And so with respect to others the same kind of testimony might be borne. The Gospel as preached by the messengers of the Cross has indeed proved itself to be the power of God unto salvation.

What cause for thankfulness exists may be seen in the following report of the death of one of the San Salvador native converts. "We have recently," writes Mr. Phillips, "lost one of our members by death. Her last hours were exceedingly peaceful, and she left a very decided testimony behind her.

"I baptised Nzumba in May, 1888. At the time of her baptism we noticed how quiet and unobtrusive she was, rather a contrast to the self-assertion of many of the women. These characteristics have marked her life ever since. About three weeks ago she was taken ill, and, during her illness, suffered a great deal with severe ulceration of the throat. At the beginning of last week it became evident that she was passing away, and the women of the town gathered round to show their sympathy. Mrs. Graham and Mrs. Phillips went in to see her day after day, and she was able to converse with them intelligently. Two days before she died she told those around her that she knew she was dying, and then divided her little

possessions among her various friends ; after she had done this she turned to all the women who were sitting around, and said :—‘ Now I have done with all these things, everything is settled, and I am just ready and waiting to die. I am not afraid, because Jesus is my Saviour and my only hope, and He is soon coming to take me to be with Him in Heaven.’ This little incident happened when none of us were there, and what she said was quite spontaneous on her part ; we did not hear of it until the next day.

“ The day before she died Mrs. Graham and Mrs. Phillips saw her, and again, at their request, she told those round her how she was not afraid to die, and urged them to prepare for the time when they would have to leave this world. When she had finished, she turned to Nlekai, who was standing by, and said, ‘ Pray for me and for all these ;’ and there, in the native hut, kneeling round the dying one, earnest prayer was offered that she might be strengthened, and her words might be blessed to those around. It was such a touching scene that all present were unable to refrain from weeping. Again is it true, ‘ she being dead yet speaketh,’ for in two instances, at any rate, concern was aroused by these things. A definite and clear testimony like this is all the more important when we remember how the natives dread death, and never think or speak of it, however bad they may be, but always persuade themselves they will get better. Our Congo Mission a failure ? Do our beloved brethren, Comber and Hartland, our noble pioneers, think so as they welcome these first-fruits in the better land ? Verily, no, but there is rejoicing as these sheaves are gathered in.”

Coming now to the stations on the river, and taking them in their geographical order, we shall first refer to

UNDERHILL OR TUNDUWA

(see frontispiece). This is the base station for the whole Mission. Here the supplies for up country are

received and duly despatched, this transport business being very arduous and responsible. Mr. J. Lawson Forfeitt, who has been ably assisted by Mr. Pinnock and Mr. Pople, is the missionary in charge, and acts as local secretary. Whilst the site of this particular station had of course to be determined by its suitability as a base of operations, and the time of the missionaries located there must necessarily be given to the business duties of the Mission, yet not a little real spiritual work has been effected. The resident population being sparse, the services on the Sunday and week days are largely for the sake of carriers engaged in transport work, and for workmen belonging to trading factories. The preaching of the Gospel at Underhill has not been in vain; occasional baptisms have gladdened the hearts of the missionaries, and a small Christian community is now in existence. A night school has also for some time been doing good service. The "Edwin Wade" Printing Press has recently been transferred to San Salvador, and is now placed under the care of Mr. Phillips. We must not forget here to state that at Underhill opportunities are frequently occurring for showing kindness and hospitality to missionaries generally, as well as to others *en route* up river or returning to the coast from the interior.

About one hundred and fifty miles higher up the Congo than Underhill is

WATHEN OR NGOMBI.

In the early period of the Mission this second station was fixed at Manyanga, but in 1884 was transferred to Ngombi. The illustration on page 95 shows the ground plan of the station. The mission house was erected in 1888, and was a great improvement upon the earlier house, which consisted of clay walls and thatched roof. The new house was, for sanitary reasons, built of bricks, made by the natives themselves. It affords considerable accommodation, and is well protected from the winds by a verandah and a belt

of trees. In addition there are various out-buildings, and the Wathen School-house, described on page 58.

On New Year's Day, 1889, seven native converts formed themselves into a Christian Church. The population immediately around the station is scanty. The hope for the future lies mainly in the large number of boys who come to the station from the district around, many of whom show signs of a change of heart. An early service is held every day for the workmen who may be about, and for traders and others who may be passing through the place.

It was at Wathen that Nlemvo, Mr. Bentley's boy, professed his faith in Christ. Much interest attaches to the conversion, Christian character, and usefulness of this Congo native. In the first instance he was brought by an uncle to be taught in the San Salvador School; afterwards he became Mr. Bentley's attendant. He was, as we have seen, of great use in the completion of the dictionary and grammar, and subsequently in the translation of the New Testament. In the early part of 1888, Nlemvo was married to Kalombo, an event of considerable interest, inasmuch as it was the first marriage between Congo Christians. According to the report of the incident, the place where the ceremony was celebrated was decorated with flags and palm branches; two gentlemen from the State were present, and a crowd of other people. Kalombo wore a white dress, and Nlemvo a singlet and a handsome cloth with a leopard cat's skin as a kilt, in the finest Congo style. Great wonder was excited as to what a Christian wedding would be like. It seemed strange to many that the man should vow to love and care for the woman. "Why that," they said, "is what the wife should do for the husband." It was felt that the example of two young native converts living together in holy wedlock, loving each other, and seeking to be fellow heirs of the grace of life would prove a powerful influence upon the heathen mind. And as other weddings were to follow, much

1888.

Bush

789

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PALMS, GUAVAS, A.
BANANAS, &c.

PEC	P.D
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GARDEN OF PALM
BANANAS, GUAVAS

NEW BRICK HOUSE

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A

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2

POOD

Cush

A. THIS IS A FENCE OF LIVING STICKS WHICH WILL IN A FEW YEARS GROW INTO TREES LARGE ENOUGH TO FORM A SHELTER ALL ROUND THE HOUSE

DUNKKEYS & GOATS

FILENVD S

GOODS IN TRANSIT

MOUSE STOKES

STOKES

55

ROOM FOR SENIOR BOYS

**BOYS HOUSE &
SCHOOL ROOM**

FOIVLS KITCHEN

F04

KITCHEN

FIELD OF MAIZE, MANIOC
SWEET POTATOES

PROPOSED
SITE OF HOUSE
W. H. B.

FLOWER GARDEN:

G.G.

G.G.

IRON
CLOTH
STORE

WISFORD'S
RUDOLPH
CLAY

WORKMEN'S
DWELLING

WORKMEN'S
DWELLING

CARPENTERS
SHED AND
TOOL HOUSE

TERS
AND

BOUNDARY OF MISSION SITE COMPOSED OF TREES

importance naturally attached to this first Congo marriage.

In less than a year after this event, Nlemvo heard of the death of his uncle, in consequence of which he was entitled to become the chief of his town. But the young Christian knew very well that if he were to accept the position, the observance of various customs would be expected of him. These he could not conscientiously observe, and rather than do so, he would forego the chieftainship. And this he bravely and nobly did. For years now he has maintained a truly consistent character, and hereafter we shall refer to his earnest endeavours to make known the Gospel he has himself received, and according to which he is prayerfully seeking to live.

Of several others who have been baptised upon a profession of their repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we might give interesting particulars. Mr. Davies and Mr. Cameron with Mr. Bentley find no little cause for encouragement. A recent report from one of the missionaries says:—"I feel very hopeful as to a large number of people, of a good many of our scholars and some of our work people and town people, but am afraid of saying what might perhaps produce an exaggerated impression at home. We have abundant reason to thank God and take courage." Thirty-three are now in the membership of this Church.

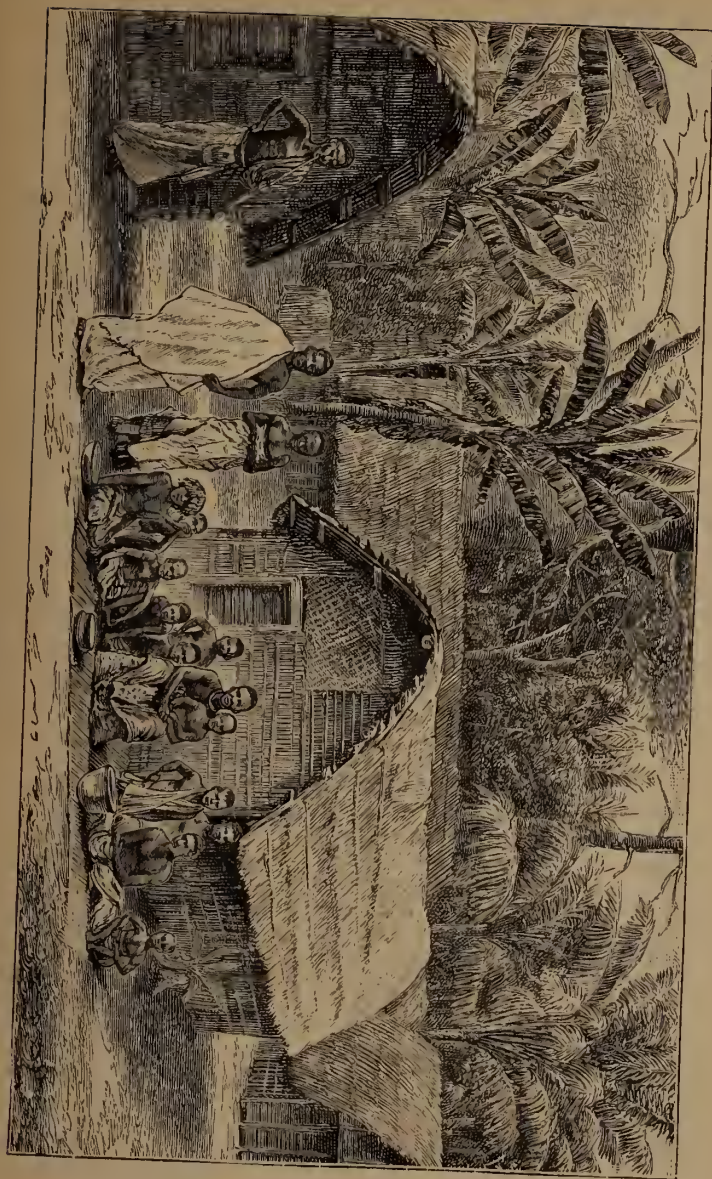
The next station is

ARTHINGTON OR NSHASHA,

about eighty miles beyond Wathen, and near to the Pool above the cataracts, the point where the river enters upon its long reach of navigable waterway.

As at Underhill so here, much time is necessarily occupied with the up-river transport, forwarding by the steamers the supplies which have come up by the land journeys. It was toward the end of 1886 that this station was established, having been removed

VILLAGE OF NSHASHA.



from a less convenient site. Just, however, before the removal, a heavy loss was inflicted upon the Mission by the outbreak of a terrible fire, consuming most of the buildings, which contained very valuable stores for the new up-river stations. The loss was estimated at no less than £4000, but such was the splendid and spontaneous generosity of the friends of the Mission, that in a short time the whole of this sum was contributed to repair as far as was possible this very serious disaster.

On the removal of the station to Nshasha, much time had to be given to the erection of the new buildings, and the transport of stores, but the missionaries had many Gospel talks with the natives, and were enabled to begin daily services, as well as regular teaching in the school. The work was, however, unfortunately hindered by the migration of the people away from Nshasha to the north bank of the river, in consequence of some State troubles that arose. In time they returned, and in 1892 Mr. Gordon reported a good work of grace amongst the boys. Still the progress was slow, but at length Mr. Roger was able to write as under :—

“It is a great joy to me to report to you our first baptism here at Stanley Pool for the last five years; it has cheered our hearts in the work, and we are hoping that more will soon follow. It was on the third Sunday in April that we all gathered to the water’s edge, and, in the presence of all our boys and workpeople, Mr. Gordon baptised two of our school boys. It was a most impressive service, and we all felt it to be a very solemn time; the boys spoke out so boldly to the others of their love to Christ and the longing desire they have had to follow Him. We know there are several others who have lately given their hearts to Jesus, and trust soon to have the joy of welcoming them into the Church. On the Sunday evening, we all gathered around the Lord’s Table, and after I had given the right hand of fellowship to the

two who had been baptised, Nkendi and Zikubaka, they for the first time joined us in partaking of that sacred ordinance. I am sure we all felt refreshed after this most sacred service." Four other boys have recently been baptised, and a Christian Church has been formed.

This station has recently been visited by the governor of the Congo Free State, who seemed very pleased at the work which was being done, and was greatly astonished that the buildings should have been put up by the native boys. He was kind enough to examine the school children, and when one of them read to him out of Lusansu Lu Nkand 'A Nzambi, the highest class-book in use, he patted him on the head, saying, "Well done; as good as a white boy."





CHAPTER IX.

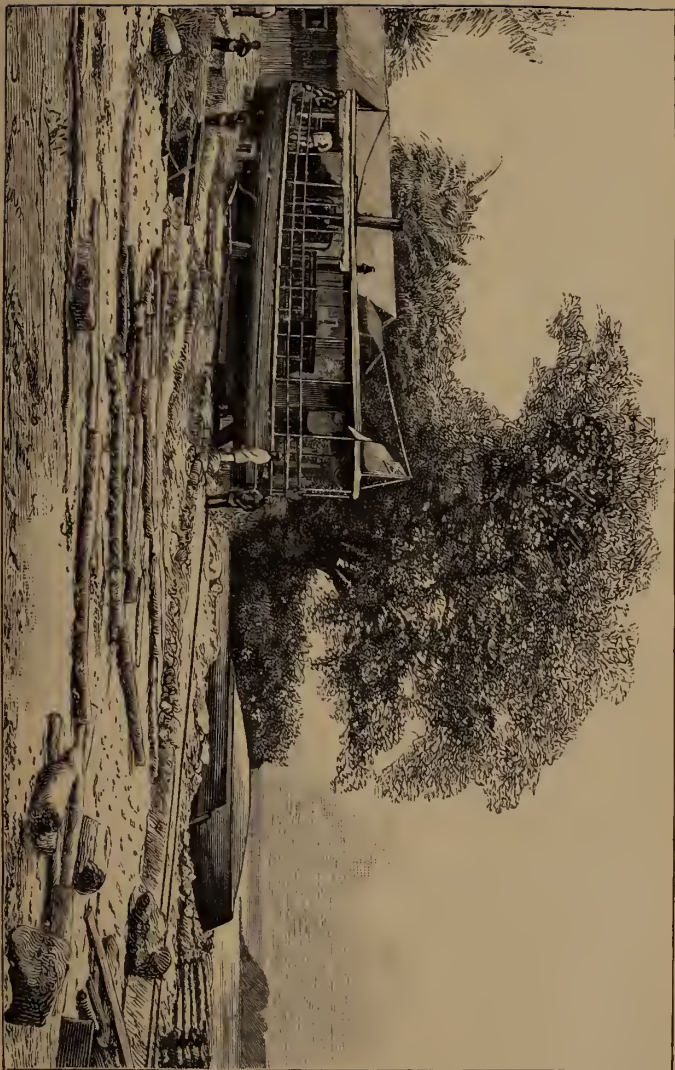
THE NATIVE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES—(*continued*).

IN accordance with the original purpose of the Society, stations have been founded on the upper reaches of the Congo—as far as opportunity and means have allowed.

The first station above the Pool, some two hundred miles beyond is

BOLOBO.

Though prospected earlier, it was founded in 1888. In the course of a few weeks a small grass house and a mat-covered building, serving as a school-house, were constructed. At the very first service that was held, besides the workpeople and the crew of the *Peace*, some eighty natives were present. This station is planted in the midst of a large population. For five miles there is a continuous series of houses, whilst with intervals for more than twenty miles there are towns densely inhabited, affording a splendid sphere for missionary labour. Feeling the great importance, for health reasons, that proper accommodation should be provided for those resident at the



S.S. "PEACE" ON THE SLIP IN FRONT OF WORKSHOP, BOLOBO STATION.

station, Mr. Grenfell, with the help of a young man from the coast, set himself to build a suitable dwelling-house, a fire-proof iron store, and a further house for Miss Silvey's use.

In 1890 Mr. Grenfell was able to report a small band of eight consistent believers. The accommodation proving too limited to hold those who came to hear the Gospel, a larger building had to be erected. The little church was in time gladdened by the addition of several converts, as many as twenty-seven young people, three of them the sons of a chief, being received into fellowship. Well might Mr. Glennie write, "From the enthusiasm manifested by these converts we have formed a happy augury of the future of the work."

On the 4th of September, 1893, Mr. Kirkland, a new missionary, reached Bolobo. Giving an account of his first Sunday, he wrote:—"In the forenoon we had a service in the school, and in the afternoon Mr. Darby had a Bible-class in his house, and a number of the English-speaking boys came together to study the second chapter of Luke's Gospel. Evening we had a splendid open-air service in one of the towns close by the station. Mr. Darby was preacher, and had an audience of over two hundred people, who gave wonderful attention to his message, and we hope the seed thus sown will spring up and bear fruit." Later intelligence reports further baptisms and more inquirers seeking religious instruction.

It should be here mentioned that Bolobo has been selected as the most convenient spot for a dockyard to the Mission, where needful repairs can be effected. Workshops have consequently been erected, in which is used the lathe supplied by friends in Birmingham, the working of which greatly astonishes the natives. The new steamer *Goodwill*, referred to in the following chapter, has been reconstructed and duly launched at this station.

About one hundred miles beyond Bolobo is

LIVERPOOL OR LUKOLELA

station, which came into actual existence in November, 1886, being called Liverpool on account of contributions raised in that city. The up-river extension having been long delayed, owing to many difficulties and trials, it was, therefore, with much satisfaction and keen zest the missionaries at length entered this new district. Messrs. Biggs, Richards, and Whitely, who had come up by the *Peace*, interviewed the chief, who showed a most cordial spirit, inviting them to settle in his town and promising to help all he could. He willingly sold two native huts, which were re-erected upon a cleared plot of ground. The people were very friendly disposed. In a few days the *Peace* left with Mr. Whitely and Mr. Charters, who had charge of the steamer, on board; Mr. Biggs and Mr. Richards remaining to occupy the station. Before separating, the four brethren held a prayer meeting in the cabin of the little steamer, when a blessing was earnestly sought upon the new undertaking, Mr. Biggs adding the following postscript to a letter he had written giving the above particulars:—" *Peace* going early to-morrow morning; Richards and I comfortably housed in a native hut, rather crowded, but happy in spite of the hardship. We are both in excellent health, and are working hard with shovel, axe, and saw."

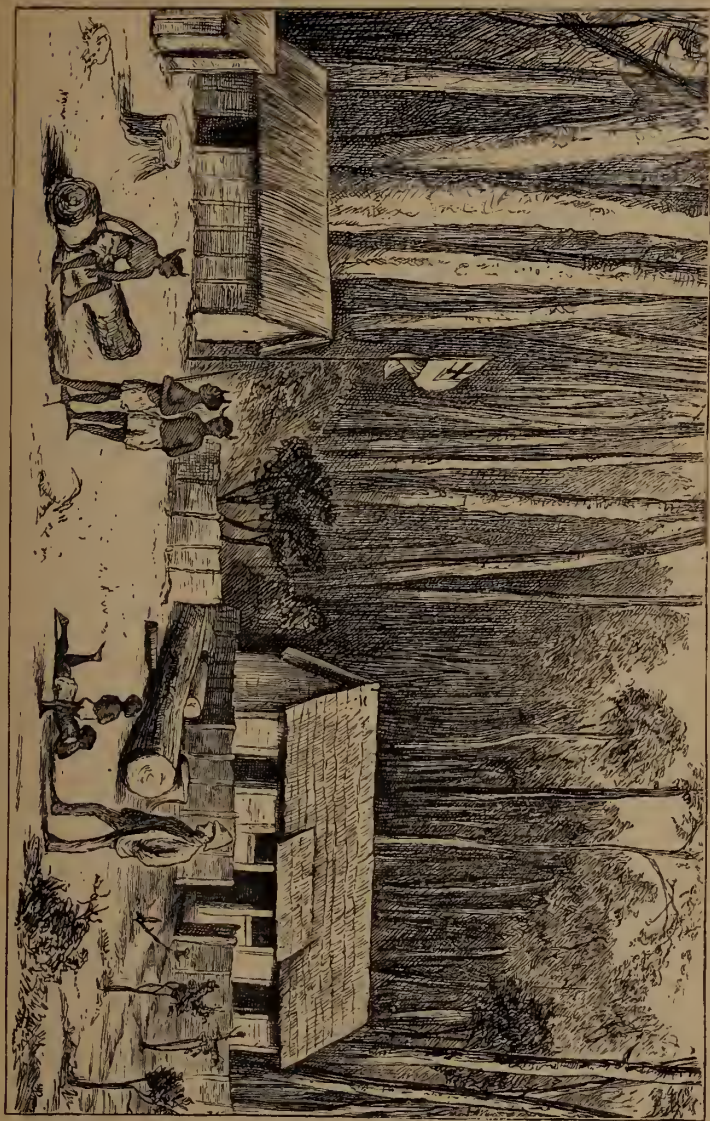
Mr. Bentley visiting the station some months afterwards reported as under:—"It was a great pleasure to find things progressing well. The buildings were as forward as could be expected, for only a few workmen were available, and they had not enough barter stuff to feed or pay native labourers until we arrived. A dense forest surrounds the station, and the felling and clearing away of a sufficient number of trees to render it safe to live in the house has taken much time and energy; and even now some twenty tall trees must come down before they can be sure that

nothing could fall on them during the wild tornadoes which are so common. A second and larger house was nearly finished ; but most satisfactory of all were the relations with the people. The medical work, and the intimacy due to frequent visits to the towns, have won the esteem of the people. They begin to understand our work better. Good progress has been made in the language, and already our brethren learn, talk, and understand with fair ease. With such progress as this, and well-filled stores, we can now reckon Liverpool Station to be fairly established."

In the autumn of 1889, Mr. Clarke and Mr. Scrivener became the resident missionaries. Some six months afterwards the latter wrote:—"I wish I could send you statistics of church membership, but we have no converts yet. Now is the time for ploughing and sowing—by-and-by the harvest and the time of reaping. O, that we may be privileged to help to bring in the sheaves! God will give the increase." God honoured the confidence of His servants and rewarded their prayerful toil ; for on the first Sunday in 1892 a Christian Church was planted, six converts being baptised. A crowd of natives gathered to witness the observance of the rite. The Lord's Supper followed, "when again," says Mr. Scrivener, "we realised God's blessing and presence." All through the day they were wondrously helped. Nothing occurred to mar any of the proceedings, some of which were so strange to the poor benighted folk there. One of the boys baptised was Mr. Richard's boy ; another, a lad ransomed from slavery, having changed owners some ten or twelve times ; whilst others were slaves of men in a town close by. The work has since been slowly but surely progressing, several having become thoughtful, and Mr. Whitehead speaks of the school as doing well, and anticipates great things from the attention that is paid to the instruction given upon spiritual subjects.

Before proceeding, it may be noted that a small

MISSION STATION AT LUKOLELA ON THE UPPER CONGO RIVER.



paper, entitled "Fraternal Notes," has been published at Lukolela, which is circulated amongst the missionaries of the different societies especially with a view to promote unity in method.

MONSEMBI

station is two hundred miles farther up the river than Lukolela. It was prospected in July, 1890, by Mr. Weeks and Mr. Stapleton. The account given by the former of their journey brings so graphically before the mind what searching for a site may mean that we quote at some length. "The first place we stopped at the people ran away and left us an empty town. We went ashore, and called to the natives to sell us some fowls, but they would not come near. They said if the white men stay behind they would sell fowls to the boys. We did so, and after a few minutes, hearing who we were and what we came for, they were very friendly and wanted us to settle in their town, and were quite rejoiced to find we had not come to fight, as they did not want to. We had no trouble in getting two men from there to go to see other places, so that we might have less trouble with the people. We quietly entered and walked through several other towns, and were much amused at the reception we had from the people, and partly fixed upon a site in the Bundundu district; but we are going to see if we can find a better. We came upon one large town and wanted to go ashore, but directly we stopped the women scouted and the men put themselves in fighting posture, and gave us distinctly to understand that we should not land without a spear or two at us. We sent the two men from a neighbouring town ashore to ask them to let us land, but they threatened to kill them. So we thought it best to get away. We went to another set of towns and then on to Bangala State Station for a permit to build. After leaving Bangala we thought

it better to go on, so we went as far as the river Luika, which is about 900 miles from the Pool.

"We started on the 8th of August on our return journey down river. I have not yet seen signs of the vast population of the Upper River. I believe there are millions of people, but all you can see of



FIRST MISSION HOUSE AT MONSEMBI STATION, UPPER CONGO RIVER.

them are the towns indicating their presence along the river banks. What we shall have to do is to get as large a sphere as we can for work on the river, and in years to come work back to the people in the interior where the vast population is. The river scenery up here is much more beautiful and tropical

than it is below. The banks are alive with the notes of a thousand birds and insects, and the river is full of fish and reptiles. In every town we landed we caused a considerable amount of excitement. The people were not sure whether we had come to fight or not, so they always got ready for us. We landed with our walking sticks only, chatted with the people, bought fowls with empty bottles, brass wire, and tin plates; and, in a very little time we were all friends. In these towns no women or children were to be seen, only men with ugly-looking knives, long spears, bows and arrows ready; in some places they all ran away with the exception of a few men, perhaps too old or too sick to run. It was amusing to hear these braves (?) laugh and jeer those who had gone. We have decided to settle in the Monsembi district, at a town called Boguidu; it is sixty miles above Lulanga on the north side of the Congo river. It is the centre of a populous set of towns at the mouth of a large creek that runs into the Mobangi. The creek is lined with towns. The people are Bangalas, one of the most energetic and progressive tribes on the river, and in learning their language we shall have a great area opened up to us. In a year or two we shall need a boat, but for the present we can do all we shall have time to do in a canoe."

The missionaries soon found they had settled down amongst veritable cannibals. They had abundant and most horrible evidence that it was common custom for the Bangala to feast upon the flesh of those whom they might capture in their petty wars. When impelled by the lust of blood they found that there was no cruelty too shocking for them to perpetrate; and yet they estimated them to be the finest people on the river—athletic, intelligent, manly, energetic and fearless to a degree—inspiring the hope that when subdued and conquered by the power of Divine grace the Bangala converts would become fit instruments for the evangelisation of their numerous tribes.



VIEW OF THE UPPER CONGO FROM BOPOTO STATION.

The school started by Mr. Weeks and Mr. Stapleton soon became popular, the boys around readily responding to the call of the bell. The first two years were mainly occupied with the inevitable building, with cultivating a plot of ground on which to raise necessary produce, school teaching, reducing the language to writing, and with establishing relations of friendship with the people. Mrs. Weeks, too, had succeeded in getting together a large school of girls.

Early in 1893, Mr. Stapleton wrote home to the following effect:—"As yet we claim no Bangala converts, but regard our work as being in a very hopeful condition. We count it a joy to work amongst a tribe savage to a degree, but largely open to the influence of new ideas, and of a native independence of character which, transformed by grace, shall develop into a noble, sturdy African manhood in Christ Jesus. Monsembi is the only Protestant mission station amongst this growing tribe. The greatness of the work at times appals us; but the Almighty Father is with us, and by the help of the Divine Spirit we will work on until Christ shall bless this tribe with peace, and reign King over all."

According to recent intelligence strong hopes are entertained of some of the senior boys because of the marked change in their characters. Several have expressed eager desires to be baptised, but it is thought wise to defer their baptism for a while, clearly to prove the genuineness of their profession.

BOPOTO

is the station last founded, being 200 miles still farther into the interior, and 1000 miles distant from the coast. In 1890, Mr. Grenfell fixed the site, the cost of establishing the station being generously met by two Bristol friends, Mr. W. L. Forfeitt and Mr. Oram being appointed as the resident missionaries. Soon after their settlement they were able to testify to the

kindliness of the Bopoto folk, and to the curious interest taken by them in everything they possessed, and in everything they did. After six weeks, when their knowledge of the language spoken was of course very limited, they were able on Sundays to gather large congregations, who listened to the hymns they sang, mostly in English, and looked with eagerness to the pictures they exhibited. The medical work at this early stage was found of immense value. Great progress was made in acquiring the language, as in seven months' time the missionaries could conduct the services entirely in the Bopoto tongue. Mr. White, who had gone up to the station, met with encouraging success in school work, and was most helpful in building operations. The garden, too, sown with the various seeds given to the Mission by Messrs. Sutton of Reading, was being well cultivated.

At the end of the second year the missionaries were full of thankfulness, feeling assured that they were really gaining the confidence of the people, and thereby laying a good foundation upon which they or others in days to come might build up a Church for Christ. Mr. Forfeitt then returning for furlough to England, and Mr. White having removed to another station, Mr. Balfern went out to join Mr. Oram.

Early in 1894, tidings came of a largely increased school, no less than 125 boys being in attendance, a girls' class being also started by Mrs. Forfeitt. The new chapel was a great success, the congregations being considerable. At the beginning of the present year, 1895, Mr. Brown, who had recently returned to the Congo after a visit home, wrote:—"Yesterday being Sunday, the usual service was held on the station, and not only was the building itself full, but numbers peered in through the apertures that serve as windows, listening and gazing intently at our worship of God. Here then," he adds, "is our opportunity for preaching the Gospel, and in Bopoto this

is done to-day, but what of the hundreds of towns that surround us on every hand? Who shall carry the Gospel to these?" Later intelligence conveys the glad news of the first triumphs of the cross in Bopoto. After Mr. Forfeitt had been speaking in the chapel, two lads came to him manifesting great concern as to their spiritual condition. In the evening, "their troubled hearts found peace in trusting the Saviour." The next evening the boys came for conversation and prayer, bringing others with them. Each evening the numbers increased, and meetings became frequent for testimony, prayer, and praise.

Thus, at five out of the eight stations, Christian churches have already been founded. Of the remaining three, two are those most recently opened—viz., Monsembi and Bopoto, where the spiritual conditions as we have seen are full of promise; whilst at Underhill, where the population is very sparse, the station being mainly for the transport of goods, baptisms have lately been reported.





CHAPTER X.

THE EVANGELISTIC EFFORTS OF THE NATIVE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES.

AS in other mission fields, so in this of the Congo, the great hope of winning the heathen for Christ lies in the propagation of the Gospel by its own peoples. The foreign missionary can never do what can be done by an indigenous ministry, by native converts commending by example and proclamation the faith they have themselves received. Hence the foremost place given in the missionary enterprise to training a native ministry, and the encouragement afforded to those who become disciples of Jesus, to go and tell their kindred, their neighbours, their fellow-countrymen generally, what great things God hath done for their souls.

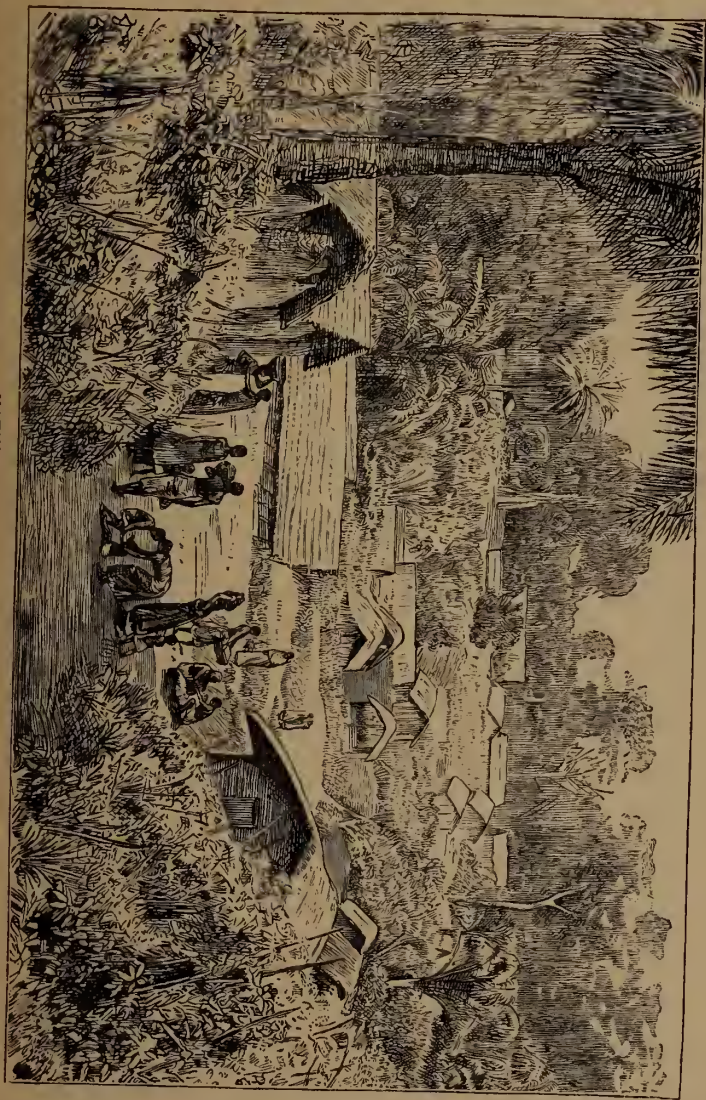
The aggressive zeal of the Congo Christians is full of promise for the religious future of their country.

It is, of course, at San Salvador, where most time has been allowed for spiritual development, that we naturally look for evidence of the self-propagating power of the Gospel, and we do not look in vain. So far back as 1888, Mr. Lewis was able to report the zealous devotion of the male members

of the little church, in visiting the neighbouring towns on Sunday mornings, to tell their fellow-countrymen of the love of God and of the way of salvation in Christ Jesus, and how that they were well received, the people listening gladly to them. From the very formation of the Church the converts had been taught the duty and privilege of contributing to the work of Christ; and when it was suggested that their offerings might be applied to the support of one of their number, who should be set apart as an evangelist, they heartily approved the suggestion, their choice falling upon Kivitidi, a Christian young man of about twenty years of age, well qualified by the training he had received from the missionaries.

This step being taken, a preliminary journey was made by Mr. and Mrs. Lewis, the elected evangelist, and one or two others, into the district around, to determine upon a good centre where Kivitidi might be located. The place selected was Etoto, where there were about ninety houses, and some four hundred inhabitants. "The next thing," wrote Mr. Lewis, "was to ascertain the feelings of the chief and people on the matter. It took the chief some time to believe that I was in earnest. It was too good for him to believe it, he said. In the evening he spoke to his people about it, and next morning they came to say how delighted they were to hear that we would start a station in their town. I took good care to explain that they were not to expect us to give them any cloth or beads; that we only came for the sake of teaching them about God. I am very anxious to make them understand this from the beginning, for I do not believe in giving away presents for the sake of making friends, much less for being allowed to come among the people to build a station. The natives ought to be taught that it is for their benefit alone we come to them, and not to bring presents. This having been properly explained, we came to the question of a site for our sub-station. There was no

NATIVE TOWN OF ETOTO, CONGO.



difficulty about this. The whole of the hill at one end of the town was free for us. We could appropriate as much as we wished for houses and farms. We then went over the ground and fixed a place to build a house." Kivitidi being well taught in carpentry soon erected such buildings as were required. The work was so prospered that nearly every man and woman in the town came to the services on the Sundays. The Church at San Salvador was greatly encouraged, and they arranged for some of their number to go in turn to reside for a while at Etoto to assist the evangelist, and help in visiting the district around. But the work begun so hopefully, was afterwards hindered by an unfortunate palaver. The disappointment was great. For a time it was thought well to suspend the services, but at the earnest request of the Etoto people they were resumed, several of the San Salvador members volunteering their assistance.

At Mbanza Mputu another member of the San Salvador Church, Nlekai, has been much blessed in his visits to preach the Gospel. Among those who have accepted the Saviour is the chief, Mbumba, whom Mr. Lewis describes as having been a very cruel man, and the terror of his people and the neighbouring chiefs, a man who would punish slight offences with death, whose town was consequently the scene of most horrible sights. The depth of the conviction of sin expressed by Mbumba was felt to be most satisfactory. "What about the sins of the past? Will God pardon the wicked things I have been guilty of?" were his inquiries, asked with the deep undertone of one in great spiritual anxiety. On the occasion of his baptism, with four other converts, everyone in the town was present, rejoicing over the marked change that had come over their chief. As Mbumba has been placed by the Portuguese Government next in power to the present King of Congo, he may be of still greater influence for good in days to

come. Several of the converts at Mbanza Mputu are in fellowship with the Church at San Salvador.

Mawunze is another out-station being entirely worked by native Christians, where large congregations come together at the Sunday services.

A fourth sub-station, Kimpesi, has, at the earnest



CHIEF OF MBANZA MPUTU.

request of the people living there, been started, a grass house having been built, which is used for worship.

These three last-mentioned towns are placed under the care of two Christian young men, Elembe and Vita. And besides these fully planted stations, there are several other places regularly visited every Sunday by native workers, at some of which the inhabitants have themselves built houses where the services can

be held, and are asking for a teacher to settle down amongst them.

It is most satisfactory to know that the entire cost of working these various sub-stations is borne by the Church at San Salvador.

From Wathen station a large amount of evangelistic itinerant work has been effected, and in some of these journeys Nlemvo has rendered good service. As far as he could be spared by Mr. Bentley from literary and translation duties, he has gone into the district around preaching the Gospel, and his influence over his fellow-countrymen has been very marked.

The little Church at Wathen has been enabled to start two regular sub-stations, one at Kinsuka, where they have appointed Lo, and for whose support they have voted 100 brass rods per month, an allowance considerably less than he was able to earn, but which he was quite willing to receive for the sake of being regularly engaged in preaching and teaching; the other at Tungwa, which is in charge of Nkaku. Both of these native evangelists meet with encouraging signs of God's presence and blessing as they labour, not only in the towns where they reside, but as they also itinerate in the surrounding districts.

Though at the up-river stations the little churches are not yet sufficiently developed to maintain out-posts, yet the native converts accompany the missionaries on their preaching tours, bearing testimony to their own conversion, and commending the Gospel to their fellow-countrymen; and it is anticipated that as at San Salvador and Wathen, so before long at other stations, some of the converts will be set apart to do the work of an evangelist.

Mention may here be made of the interest shown by the Congo Christians in missionary operations in other lands than their own. When they were informed of the celebration of the Centenary of the Baptist Missionary Society, they became desirous to unite in the commemoration. Contribution lists were opened.

From San Salvador no less a sum than £33, 14s. 3d. was forwarded to the Secretary at the Mission House in London, accompanied by the following letter written by one of the deacons:—

“Dear Sir,—As a Church here we feel very thankful that the Gospel has come to our country. Since it came to us it has done us much good and made us very happy, so we thought we would like very much to give something to help you to send out more missionaries to take the light of the Gospel to those that are in benighted lands like ours. Therefore we heartily made a collection, and collected a sum of £33, 14s. 3d.

“Kivitidi and I send it, on behalf of the Church. Do accept it as our thank-offering to your *Centenary* Fund of the Baptist Missionary Society.

“We are, on behalf of the Church,

“KIVITIDI, } *Deacons.*
“NLEKAI, }

The list of contributions is in itself so remarkable and so suggestive, as to call for reproduction in this volume:—

No. Men.	Name.	Description of Goods paid.	Native Value.	£	s.	d.
			Dollars.			
1	Matoko .	. 1 pig and 1 piece of cloth	16	3	4	0
2	Kalandenda .	. 2 pieces cloth	8	1	12	0
3	Kivitidi .	. 100 large ferret bells . .	5	1	0	0
4	Nlekai .	. 1 piece Turkey red twill .	4	0	16	0
5	Ndonzwau .	. 1 „ trade handkerchiefs	4	0	16	0
6	Elembe .	. 1 „ red baft	3	0	12	0
7	Vita .	. 1 „ „	3	0	12	0
8	Diakenga .	. 100 strings beads and 1 piece handkerchiefs .	3	0	12	0
9	Mpondo .	. 1 piece white drill . .	3	0	12	0
10	Senulembwa .	. 1 „ „	3	0	12	0
11	Mauwele .	. 1 flannel shirt	2½	0	10	0
12	Diongwa .	. 1 piece handkerchiefs .	2	0	8	0
13	Matata .	. 1 „ „	2	0	8	0
14	Suvusu .	. 150 strings beads . . .	1½	0	6	0
Carry forward, .			60	12	0	0

No. Men.	Name.	Description of Goods paid.	Native Value.			
			Dollars.	£	s.	d.
		Brought forward,	60	12	0	0
15	Elembe .	Fowls	1½	0	6	0
16	Mpombolo .	1 piece prints	1	0	4	0
17	Dika	1 „ red baft	1	0	4	0
18	Mingedi . .	1 „ „	1	0	4	0
19	Etalanga . .	1 piece scarves	1	0	4	0
Women.						
20	Nembamba .	1 keg gunpowder	6	1	4	0
21	Wavatidi . .	2 pieces red baft	6	1	4	0
22	Mpuna	1 piece red baft, 200 beads	6	1	4	0
23	Lau	1 basket ground nuts and two fowls	4½	0	18	0
24	Fotelwa . . .	1 piece Oxford check . .	4	0	16	0
25	Ponta	1 „ „ „	4	0	16	0
26	Umba	1 piece prints	4	0	16	0
27	Mianza	1 „ trade cloth	4	0	16	0
28	Mansanga . .	90 large ferret bells . . .	4½	0	18	0
29	Nengudi . . .	3 baskets ground nuts . .	3	0	12	0
30	Mbaujikisa .	300 strings beads	3	0	12	0
31	Nkidiaka . . .	1 piece red baft	3	0	12	0
32	Mansonso . .	1 „ „	3	0	12	0
33	Menga	10 yards red baft	2½	0	10	0
34	Ntadila	10 „ „	2½	0	10	0
35	Soloka	1 basket nuts, 200 beads .	3	0	12	0
36	Luvuma	150 beads, 1 piece cloth .	2½	0	10	0
37	Nkiamindele .	1 piece blue baft	2	0	8	0
38	Ntinu a Nximba	1 „ scarf	2	0	8	0
39	Tonba	2 baskets nuts	2	0	8	0
40	Dima	Fowls	1½	0	6	0
41	Mona	1 piece red baft	1	0	4	0
42	Mbwaku	1 „ „	1	0	4	0
43	Mbwanji . . .	1 „ „	1	0	4	0
44	Kinsukulu . .	100 strings beads	1	0	4	0
45	Mayeto	100 „ „	1	0	4	0
46	Mr. and Mrs. Phillips	Cash	10	2	0	0
47	Mr. and Mrs. Lewis	Cash	10	2	0	0
	Small sums . .	Various	3¾	0	15	3
Dollars			167½			
Centenary card collected by Nlekai (No. 44,194)				0	5	0
			<u>£33 14 3</u>			

From Underhill, Wathen, Lukolela, and Bolobo stations, similar gifts were also remitted, with the prayerful wish expressed that "God would send missionaries out to all people."

Another instance may be mentioned, showing the earnest desire of these Congo Christians to make known the glad tidings to those who are in ignorance of them. It was on the occasion of some Chinamen employed on the Congo Railway, now in course of



THE NEW CONGO MISSION STEAMER, "GOODWILL."

construction, going to San Salvador. Being much interested in these Chinese visitors, they were told how missionaries were sent to their country, and that Mr. Dixon, who was once in Congo, was now one of those missionaries. So greatly was their interest excited that they proposed to send Mr. Dixon a contribution for his work, and no less than £30 was raised, being the gifts of as many as two hundred and eighty persons.

When it is remembered that these offerings for the

spread of the Gospel were contributed by those, who, but a very few years ago, were selfish, hardened heathen, the radical change in their disposition is strikingly apparent.

In this chapter it is fitting that reference should be made to the evangelistic facilities afforded by means of the two mission steamers *Peace* and *Goodwill*. Whilst these vessels are of incalculable value for the transport of stores to the up-river stations, and for general purposes of communication, they are of such great service in strictly spiritual work that they may be regarded as equal, if not more than equal to two additional stations. In the journeys taken by the missionaries, they are frequently accompanied by native Christians, who take their part in publishing the good news of salvation. As the first steamer, *Peace*, has already been described in these pages, it may here be stated, with respect to the *Goodwill*, that it is of larger dimensions than the former, being 84 feet long by 13 feet beam, having 8 berths instead of 4, and twice the carrying capacity. In the early part of last year, this excellent vessel was duly reconstructed and successfully launched.





CHAPTER XI.

THE DEATH ROLL, AND HOW TO REGARD IT.

IN the foregoing chapters little or no reference has been made to the many and sad losses which, in the course of founding and developing the Mission, have been sustained through death. These losses require separate and special attention. In their pathetic personal interest, and in their serious bearing upon future policy, they constitute an important part of the story of this Congo Mission.

No one possessing any knowledge of the climatic conditions of Western Central Africa could have expected that the pioneer work necessary to the founding of stations would be accomplished without risk to life. The early history of all previous missions in tropical and malarial regions forbade such an expectation. The missionaries were very well aware that as they went forth they were "hazarding their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," and that the possibility, and even the probability of such losses was a contingency never absent from the minds of the promoters of the enterprise at home.

But the losses, great as they are, have been far less in proportion than those sustained by the Free State

in founding an earthly kingdom, or by traders bent on material gains, or than even the losses which have befallen some other Christian missions. And further, before attributing these losses to the necessarily baneful influence of the climate, it would be desirable, if it were possible, to determine to what extent they were preventible—preventible by the adoption of different methods, or by the exercise of a zeal under the control of a greater knowledge. It is also a question how many of these deaths would have occurred as certainly in this country as in Africa.

But weigh as we justly may these and other considerations it is only when we rise to the height of the spiritual plane that those reasons can be applied which are calculated not only to mitigate but effectually and completely to reconcile our minds and hearts to these great trials. To these reasons, however, we will turn our attention presently.

That the losses simply regarded in and by themselves have been severe and are even appalling, no one can question who is acquainted with the death roll. The first name on the roll is that of the bride-wife of the pioneer missionary, Thomas J. Comber. Then follow, at varying intervals of dates, these names:—W. H. Doke, J. S. Hartland, H. W. Butcher, J. W. Hartley, S. A. Comber, M.B., D. M'Millan, A. H. Cruickshank, A. Cowe, W. F. Cottingham, J. Maynard, J. H. Shindler, F. C. Darling, T. J. Comber, Miss Spearing, H. G. Witley, J. E. Biggs, M. Richards, A. D. Slade, S. Silvey, J. G. Brown, W. F. Wilkinson, Mrs. P. E. Comber, P. E. Comber, Mrs. Cameron, F. R. Oram, W. P. Balfern, and S. R. Webb, M.D., of whose death we sorrowfully hear as we go to press; and to these lists may be added three engineers who went from this country to assist in the reconstruction of the steamer *Peace*, whilst nine other missionaries from one cause or other have resigned their connection with the Congo Mission—viz., H. Dixon, W. Ross, H. E. Crudgington, W. Hughes, W. Seright, M.B.,

D. Charters, H. K. Moolenaar, F. A. Jeffard and R. D. Darby, two of whom are now labouring in other parts of the mission field: Mr. Dixon in China and Mr. Crudginton in India.

However sad and painful the enumeration of these names of the sainted and heroic dead, yet it is fitting they should severally find record in this volume. We refrain, however, from biographical sketches or obituary notices but as indicating the sublime devotion and Christ-like consecration of spirit by which these martyrs of the Cross were characterised; and as showing how they themselves regarded their own death, it were well to quote some of their personal utterances. Said one at his valedictory meeting: "He might come home again; if so, good-bye till then. It might be that death's bright angel might call him to higher work, and perhaps they might never meet again till before the throne; yes, good-bye till then." Wrote another to Mr. Baynes: "In this enterprise of winning Africa for Christ there must be, I know, my dear Mr. Baynes, much of what the world calls loss and sacrifice, and it may be that many will fall in the blessed work of foundation building only; but what of this? To have any share in this noblest of all toil, however humble or obscure, be it only hewing wood or drawing water, is, surely, honour and privilege any servant of Christ must court and long for. I desire to go to this work feeling yet more intensely day by day, as the days pass on, that to live is Christ, and to die, gain; and if He should ordain for me early death, after a few years of humble, obscure, pioneering work only—well, it must all be right; for it means early and complete satisfaction. 'Then shall I be satisfied, when I awake in Thy likeness.'"

On New Year's Day another made this entry in his journal: "How is this year to be spent? In useful service in the vineyard of my Lord or called home to see Him as He is and behold His Glory and Majesty

for ever! Lord, Thou knowest best. In all things make known Thy blessed will and give me grace to do it." Said another: "I know not what may be in store for me, but I pray you remember, if I should be early called away, with my last breath I hope to pray for *more men*, deeper devotion, and more thorough surrender of all for Christ.

"To die in such a cause is lofty privilege, while to live and work is solemn responsibility.

"Oh! the joy and peace of feeling FULLY that all is committed to His wise and loving keeping.

"Father, I know that ALL my life is portioned *out by Thee*."

"Are you sorry," asked the watchers by one of these servants of God when passing away, "are you sorry you came to the Congo?" "Oh no," he replied, "very thankful." "My work's soon done, isn't it? There are many more of our men (his fellow-students) who will soon come." "For Jesus' sake." "I'll soon be home! I'll soon be home!" "Work on, brethren; don't let the loss of your men hinder you. Never give up—hope always. O Jesus! soon be at home. This is the valley; I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me. 'Twill soon be over. Tell all our boys (the boys at the Stockwell Orphanage) to seek the Saviour. Good-bye! I'll look for you; I'll wait for you. Faith can firmly trust Him, come what may. Brethren, brethren, be of good cheer. Rock of Ages cleft for me!"

Whilst others expressed themselves in the following strains:—"Work for Christ in Africa must be my life work. I desire this work more than all else, and be my life long or short, I pray it may be faithful unto the end. And who knows how soon the end may come? Life is not always to be measured by years." "As I think of the dear ones now with the Saviour, I seem to feel in a very solemn way bound to Africa. Their graves seem to be speechful, and to bid me gird up my loins and work while it is day.

What a sublime privilege it is to be allowed to carry on this Congo Mission Work! Words can never tell how greatly I rejoice in it." "Remember," to quote one other when writing to his parents, "remember, I am just as safe as if our dear brothers had not died. You committed me to God, did you not? And He is ever the same. Nothing can or shall harm me until He sees fit. A gloom is cast over us; but God's grace is equal to the emergency, and is being proportioned to our need. I go forward in His strength; that was my New Year's motto, you know. And pestilence, however rampant, shall not come near me unless there is a 'needs be.' And if so, who shall murmur?" Such then was the spirit of these Christian missionaries, who by laying down their lives for Christ's sake have for ever made sacred this Congo Mission.

Upon the heart-sorrow such early deaths must have caused to relatives and friends we do not dwell. Better were it to recall the Christian fortitude and heroic faith which, by God's grace, have been so wonderfully displayed. One knows not which the more gratefully to admire and revere, the brave devotion of those who have fallen on the field, or the trustful acquiescence of those who surrendered their sons or their daughters for the sake of Africa's redemption. Said one of the bereaved, and she a widowed mother:—"This Congo Mission is, I am confident, dearer to me to-day than ever; instead of being discouraged by our losses, let us rejoice that our loved ones have been counted worthy, let us seek a baptism for the dead, and let us all remember that now we are specially encompassed with a great cloud of witnesses—our Congo missionaries included."

"We shall indeed miss our dear son very, very much," wrote another, "but we do not regret having given him up, 'even to die,' in such a glorious cause.

"The Lord must know best, and He *cannot have made a mistake.*

"This surely must be part of His divine plan for the up-raising of poor down-trodden Africa ; and although the sowing time is bitter and sorrowful, and the sacrifice, humanly speaking, enormous, yet surely the reaping time is not far off. Ere long doubtless we shall witness a rich and abundant harvest, where so many of our loved ones have had the high honour of laying down their lives for the Christ they so dearly loved."

"Sorrowing as we do for the loss of our dear son," said yet another, "we propose to erect no monument to him in far-distant Lukungu—he lives in our hearts for ever ; but we do propose to endeavour to forward the grand objects which he had so much at heart, and as we cheerfully gave up our son to the work, so now, parents, brother, and sister unite to equip some other soldier of the Cross, who, stepping into the gap, may carry on the warfare against heathenism ; and we pray earnestly that our Heavenly Father may grant His blessing in large measure to him who will take our son's place. For this purpose I have great pleasure in enclosing a cheque to cover outfit and passage expenses of a new Congo missionary."

In view of the nature of the motives actuating those who laid down their lives for Christ in Congo, and as well of the fine spirit of surrender characterising the friends from whom they parted, does not the serious question arise whether any interposition intended to restrain and hinder might not have resulted in violation of solemn duty, in the resistance of a Divine call, yea, in the denial of a privileged ministry which angels might have coveted ?

And further, for the purpose of regarding aright the losses on the Congo, it needs to be said that these young missionaries were by no means under the spell of a maudlin fanaticism ; their pious aspirations did not come of a sentimental religiousness ; on the other hand, their piety was robust, and their views of things were practical ; they went forth hoping and intending

For permission to reproduce the photographs of the deceased members of the Congo band, given on pages 130 and 131, we are indebted to the following :—

Messrs. Elliott & Fry, Baker Street, W.; Messrs. Barraud, Ltd., Oxford Street, W.; Mr. W. E. Wright, Forest Gate, E.; Mr. J. G. Tunny, Maitland Street, Edinburgh; Mr. W. G. Parker, Holborn, W.C.; Messrs. Seaman & Sons, Chesterfield; Messrs. Taylor & Bastain, Kentish Town, N.W.; Mr. Ed. Smith, Cheapside, E.C.; Messrs. Rees, Pitcher, & Co., Clapham Road, S.W.; Messrs. Eason & Co., Kingsland, N.; Mr. J. Bowman, Jamaica Street, Glasgow; Messrs. Villiers and Quick, Park Street, Bristol; Mr. W. R. Munro, Edinburgh; Mr. T. Miller, Wellingborough; Mr. Watson, Hull; Mr. Hy. Pickering, Manchester; Mr. G. V. Yates, Sheffield; Mr. T. Protheroe, Bristol; Mr. Wm. Mountain, Clapham Road, S.W.; Mr. F. Haes, Westbourne Grove, W.; Mr. J. Bowen, Kilburn, N.W.; Mr. Ramsey, Bridge of Allan; and Mr. Percy S. Lankester, Tunbridge Wells.

MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE HAZARDED THEIR LIVES FOR THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

A. COWE. A. H. CRUICKSHANK. D. McMILLAN. P. E. COMBER. Mrs. P. E. COMBER. J. W. HARTLEY. H. W. BUTCHER.
S. COMBER, M.D.



J. MAYNARD. J. S. HARTLAND. T. J. COMBER. Mrs. T. J. COMBER. W. F. COTTINGHAM. W. H. DOKE.

M. RICHARDS, J. E. BIGGS, H. G. WHITLEY, J. H. SHINDLER, F. C. DARLING, MISS SPEARING, A. D. SLADE.

W. F. WILKINSON, J. G. BROWN, S. SILVEY, Mrs. CAMERON, F. R. ORAM, W. P. BALFEEN, S. WEBB, M.D.

“Neither count I my life dear unto myself.”

to live and to live long in the service of their Divine Master. Those responsible for sending them to Africa have done all in their power to inculcate this healthy Christian spirit and proper estimate of the preciousness of life.

And again, before referring to the higher considerations which we are aware alone can reconcile to these losses, it is of great importance to point out that, of late years, the deaths have been much less frequent than in the earlier period of the history of this Mission. Taking the six years, beginning with 1883, the year when the first death occurred after that of Mrs. T. J. Comber, during that period there were eighteen losses, whereas in the subsequent six years there were eight, less than half, in four of which years there were only three, two of the three being ladies. It is believed that the greater immunity from loss is the result of the more settled state of the Mission, the improved sanitary condition of the stations, and the ability to treat with better medical skill the fever of the country. And so, as experience further increases, it is reasonable to hope that the lives of the missionaries will be, to a still larger extent, preserved.

But great as is the relief afforded by the remarkable decrease in the mortality of late years, and hopeful as such a fact unquestionably is with respect to the future, there can be no doubt that, in a malarial country like the Congo, mission work must be undertaken at some peril to life. This being so, it is only when the high spiritual results produced by these losses by death are considered, that the right position is found from which to meet the inquiry—not always put in a calculating, much less cynical spirit—to what purpose is this waste? Many sincere Christians, staggered by the repeated tidings of disaster, have questioned the wisdom of sending young men out to Africa, as they say, to die, feeling that brave lives are being needlessly sacrificed, and sorrow to the bereaved unnecessarily occasioned.

But what if, through the self-sacrificing love and devotion of these young missionaries, the foundation of the kingdom of God could only be effectively laid? What if, in this connection, the great principle of Christ's teaching applies—viz., the necessity of the death of the wheat corn for the sake of the much fruitfulness of the golden harvest? Is it not significant that hard heathen hearts should be moved to tenderness and pity by the very fact of suffering and death? "These white men must love us much, or they would never leave their beautiful country, so far away, to come here and get fever and die," was the potent conclusion to which, in the early history of the Mission, the natives were compelled to come. And as progress was made, these were the sentiments, as expressed by one of themselves, which widely prevailed: "How very very sorry I am for Mr. Comber's death and for Mr. Percy's sake. The people, too, at San Salvador and Ngombi are very very sorry to lose a very kind friend like Mr. Comber; they say that he was not only a kind friend, but that he was a chief, settling palavers in their towns better than chiefs do, and telling us good messages from God; and the people ask why has God taken Mr. Comber so quickly, and other white men who have died lately, and even I, I often wonder how it is God is doing this; *perhaps God is teaching us something which we do not know yet*, but God knows everything and what is the best for His work."

And when fever claimed the last of the Comber family one wrote thus:—

"From our side, the side of the blank, and the silence, and the cold grave, this loss is very sad. But if 'we have not followed cunningly devised fables' there is another side, bright with the light of God's face, musical with Heaven's harmonies, glad with the energy of perfect service, and the peace of an Eternal Home. Nor on this side is it all loss. When the alabaster box was broken the house was

filled with the odour of the ointment; and though the last of the Combers has fallen, the stimulating fragrance of their sacrifice will steal all round the world."

Not so very long ago a missionary addressing an audience in this country said, in words something to this effect:—As an illustration of Christ's love for sinners, he had sometimes ventured when speaking to the natives to refer to the love of dear fellow-missionaries in coming out to Congo even to die for their sake, and then as he had spoken of the Saviour's love in coming down from Heaven, and had told the story of the Cross, light seemed to dawn upon their understandings, and tears of mingled sorrow and joy started from their eyes.

And if after this manner God is working out His own redeeming purposes, and the blood of these martyr-spirit missionaries is thus, as heretofore, becoming the very seed of the Church in Congo; so also the influence of the Christian heroism displayed in that distant land has without question been reacting for good upon the Churches at home. No one can tell how the spiritual life of individual believers, and the godly zeal of Christian communities, have been quickened afresh by the inspiration flowing from the examples of disinterested, unselfish devotion the Congo Mission has furnished. And is it not further certain that the missionary interest in other parts of the mission field, and this, not with regard only to the Baptist Missionary Society, has gained a new stimulus through the holy valour of these young lives so early but so triumphantly closed in Christ's service in Africa?

OUR HEROES.

WE talk sometimes of the days long past,
Of our ancient chivalry.
We praise the deeds of the knights of old,
Their courage and courtesy.

They faced the foe on the battle-field ;
They crossed o'er the deep sea wave ;
They travelled far into Eastern lands,
To save from Islam's cruel hands
Their Lord and Saviour's grave.

In many a ballad quaint and old,
In many a poet's rhyme,
The names and the famous deeds are told
Of the knights of "ye olden tyme."
Say ye that men's hearts are colder grown
Than in days of long ago—
That this age knows nought of chivalry—
That only for wealth, or station high,
Great deeds are attempted now?

But the deeds I tell and the men I praise
Belong not to days of yore ;
Brief is the time, and the months but few,
Since these heroes left our shore.
Yet never Crusader among them all
Had courage more brave and high,
Nor among King Arthur's Table Round
Could knights with nobler aims be found,
Or more perfect courtesy.

They went not to rescue the sepulchre
Where once the dear Lord had lain ;
But to raise a land from age-long sleep
Into life and light again.
For long over Afric's streams and plains
A dense, dark veil was spread.
That veil had in part been lifted now,
They saw that ignorance, sin, and woe,
Were hidden beneath its shade.

'Twas not for the sake of a "ladye fayre,"
'Twas not for an earthly home,
That they bade farewell to their native land
And crossed o'er the ocean foam ;

But a tender pity filled their hearts,
 For their brethren across the sea ;
 They heard a wail from those far-off lands,
 They saw, in fancy, those " stretched-out hands"—
 Stretched out in their misery.

They went by command of no earthly king,
 They followed no captain here ;
 Yet an order, clear as a trumpet call,
 Fell on each listening ear.
 " Lord, what wilt Thou have me do ? " they prayed,
 And swiftly the answer came,
 " Go seek thy brothers on Afric's shore,
 They perish in darkness, their need is sore ;
 Go, tell them of Jesu's name."

Go, tell of the Father's wondrous love,
 How He gave His only Son ;
 How the Saviour left His home above
 To ransom them every one.
 Tell of His wondrous life on earth,
 Of the tender words He spake ;
 Tell that He died for the black man's sin,
 That He rose from the dead and the fight did win,
 And their sleeping souls will wake.

O ! gladly they followed their King's behest,
 Fearlessly crossed the sea.
 Yet they little dreamed that in Afric's land
 So brief would their labour be.
 But the summons came from the King they loved,
 And they knew His will was best.
 They laid down the task they had just begun ;
 They put off the armour so late put on ;
 And peacefully sank to rest.

Calmly they sleep by the Congo's stream,
 'Mid those that they yearned to save ;
 Yet a voice still speaks to the black man's heart,
 As he stands by the white man's grave,

Telling of patient toil and care,
And of tender sympathy ;
Leading their thoughts, through the human love,
To the Father of black and white, above,
To the Saviour of bond and free.

Were they not heroes? These men I sing,
So tender, so true, and brave.
O ! who will finish the task they left
To rest in the peaceful grave?
Ah ! we know the heroes will never fail,
Till the heathen are gathered home,
Till the Afric joins in the glorious song,
Till the whole wide earth shall to Christ belong,
Till the Kingdom of God is come.

H. S.





CHAPTER XII.

THE FUTURE OF THE CONGO MISSION.

IN the foregoing chapters the story of the difficulties, the trials, and the achievements of this remarkable Mission, with such detail as space would allow, has been told. But what about the future? The narrative extends over some seventeen years. What will be the record of another similar period of time? Or what will be the condition of this Mission when its jubilee shall be commemorated? The initiatory stage may now be said to be past. Will the progress be equal to the expectation and the possibilities? The foundations are now it is believed well and surely laid. Will the superstructure be reared without needless delay? The future of this Congo Mission lies with God, yes, but with God, as He shall answer the prayers, and accept and use the gifts in means and in men His own people shall supply! Thus, in a very true and real, if subordinate sense, the progress and triumphs of this missionary enterprise rest with the Churches at home. If the honour of being permitted to begin so important a work for God is great, the responsibility of its continuance and its growth is surely greater.

Let it be here stated, that as far back as 1885 it was solemnly and deliberately resolved to establish at least ten stations on the uninterrupted waterway of the Upper Congo, between Stanley Pool and Stanley Falls, at about an average distance of a hundred miles apart. Of these stations, including the one at the Pool, only, as we have seen, half have been founded. The sites, however, of two others have been secured, but wait occupation, one being near the Lubi Falls on the Loika river, which, in the future, as the country in that region shall become better known, may be a most important station, being possibly on the high road to the Eastern Soudan; and the other at Mojembo, on the great Mobangi river, where an eligible plot of land was obtained two years ago, the necessary material for founding it being in hand, but which, at the present moment, continues unoccupied.

Let Mr. Grenfell, the discoverer of this mighty waterway, speak for himself as to the importance of the Mobangi. After referring to the possibility of the Aruwimi and the Loika affluents being barred for the present, and thinking perhaps that the contemplated plan for extension might be better carried out on the Mobangi, Mr. Grenfell has said :—

“The more we hear of the Mobangi as a route to the interior, the more are we impressed with the advantages it offers for the carrying out of our plans. On the farther affluents of the Mobangi we hear of large towns, and such a measure of civilisation as we have not elsewhere encountered in the whole of the Congo basin. Captain Van Gele tells us that at Bangasso, between six and seven hundred miles from the confluence of the Mobangi with the Congo, he was received by the chief in great state, accompanied by some two thousand trained soldiers, and a bodyguard of thirty men in Soudanese uniforms, and armed with weapons evidently secured through the trade routes of the Soudan. The language here belonged to quite a different stock from those spoken over the greater

portion of the Congo basin, being Negroid, and not Bantu, and communication was maintained through the medium of Arabic. This place, Bangasso, is only one of several important districts the Belgian explorers tell us of, and with which they have been able to enter upon satisfactory relationship; and the accounts just recently to hand make us very desirous indeed to include them within the range of our forward policy."

And Mr. Darby, visiting Mojembo some eighteen months after the above utterance, was able to report of the projected site as follows:—

"There are six or seven towns within touch by canoe on either side of the place; there is an inland population not far away. The people there are the most industrious I have yet seen in the whole of Africa; every art practised on the Congo we found carried on in this place in the most business-like fashion—iron smelting, smith's work of all kinds, brass necklets, anklets, bracelet making, copper manufacture, cloth making, oil-extracting from the kernels; plenty of food, good houses, friendly people, clean, and plenty of them—surely such a site could not be excelled! . . . During the remainder of our exploration, we saw many eligible sites, but none that seemed so suitable as Mojembo. I wish I had space to write you all we saw at Mojembo, that instinctively drew us to it as a fitting spot. The language is strange, it is true; I got about 150 words of it. They are very peculiar in form; some, I think, induce me to suppose that it belongs to the Bantu family—in fact, so far as the list I have secured goes, I may say I am certain it belongs to that family; its nearest relation, is, I think, in the Bopoto language. For this and many other most cogent reasons, we think that this spot is singularly suitable and hopeful for the new station."

But two years have passed away, and owing to circumstances, no station has as yet been established on

this very eligible spot, though, happily, there is good reason to believe it will shortly be occupied. In the very near future it is earnestly hoped Mojembi will become the centre of important missionary activity.

Should the planting of the rest of the proposed stations be delayed, it has to be borne in mind that an immense amount of most promising evangelistic itineration will be possible now that two steamers and other boats are at the service of the Mission. The recent addition of so splendid a vessel as the *Goodwill* will enable the missionaries to avail themselves as never heretofore of the Congo riverine system, affording as it does such wonderful facilities of communication with the vast populations of the country.

It has further to be borne in mind, as an inducement to persevering endeavour, that every year the native evangelistic resources are becoming greater, and consequently the fresh needs caused by extending operations may, by converts trained for service, be more readily supplied.

But if, contemplating the millions of people who wait for the proclamation of the Gospel, remembering the perfect natural facilities for reaching them which so wonderfully obtain in the Upper Congo region, and if in view of the blessed results already achieved, the prospects may be truly described as most promising and most inspiring; then the main question appears to be: will the Christian Churches, by whose prayerful sympathy and consecrated gifts this Congo Mission was begun and has so far been maintained, be prepared for a forward policy? Will the funds be forthcoming, without which new stations cannot be founded and manned?

That the Congo Mission is costly, owing to the conditions in which it has to be conducted, cannot be gainsaid, inasmuch as about one-half of the total expenditure is absorbed in freight, transport, and other charges incidental to the exceptional nature of the enterprise. To what extent the present rate of

outlay may be relieved when the railway, in the Lower Congo from Matadi to Stanley Pool, now in course of construction, shall be completed, it is impossible to tell, but that in time some relief may be obtained it is reasonable to expect. The greater carrying capacity of the new steamer, the *Goodwill*, for supplying the up-river stations with the needful stores, will doubtless too effect some pecuniary advantage. And further, the possibility, as the conditions of life improve, of the missionaries remaining for longer periods at their post without the necessity of such frequent changes, will also help to reduce expenditure. And as the country becomes more civilised and developed, other methods of procedure less costly may be devised.

Giving, however, all these and other points their due consideration, there is little prospect of this Congo Mission being conducted without considerable outlay, if its operations are to proceed upon the lines, which, after most careful consideration and long experience, have been adopted as those alone likely in the main to lead to permanent success.

Will then the Churches which are interested in this Mission be ready with the requisite support? Do they so realise the responsibility and blessedness of this service for Christ in dark Africa that as the demands grow their gifts will increase? May the great Head of the Church bestow abundantly His grace upon His servants, so that having been intrusted with the Gospel, they may worthily and faithfully discharge the solemn but glorious trust!

But perhaps it will be asked, Instead of attempting any further extension, would it not be wiser and every way more desirable to concentrate effort upon the stations already founded? Better to have a few stations efficiently worked rather than a larger number feebly maintained. There must, it will be affirmed, be a limit to the sphere of labour. Much may be said in favour of a policy of concentration, provided always that the points of concentration are as numer-

ous as earnest and self-denying efforts will permit. It is possible to become content to settle down, notwithstanding the great commission reads: *Go* and preach the Gospel to *every* creature.

As this phase of the missionary enterprise is most important in its bearing upon future policy, it will be appropriate and useful to quote in this connection the opinion of Mr. Grenfell: "It has been urged," he said on a certain occasion, "by some that we are scattering our energies over too wide an area. They ask: 'Why not concentrate your efforts upon a narrower field, as business men would do?' They say—and they have been successful business men who have said it, as well as enthusiastic missionary helpers—'It has been far better in our experience to thoroughly work a small district than to spend the same amount of work over a larger one.' It is an argument that falls with great weight upon the ears of practical people, and, so far as business in this country is concerned, I have no doubt that it indicates the right policy; but in Africa we are dealing with quite a different set of circumstances, and are at work under quite different conditions. There was a time when the traders on the Congo maintained the policy our friends now urge upon ourselves. In those days the missionaries led the van towards the interior, but they are bygone days, for business men have pushed ahead of us, and left us far behind; and, as a consequence of their spreading out, the short dividends of the policy of concentration have given place to as much profit in one year as they used to make in ten. So, you see, the advice of our friends, though apparently so sound, and backed up as it is with such great experience, and also with such very practical sympathy for our work, does not hold good under all conditions, and much less does it hold good in the distinctly different sphere of the Christian propaganda. We missionaries on the Congo have been greatly impressed by the effectual working of

the 'heaven of the Kingdom,' and we maintain we are pursuing the wisest policy, and the policy most in accord with our Divine Master's will, when we carry the 'heaven' to the greatest number of separate centres, and in His name set it working there. And we also feel, considering the needs of the case, and the commission we have received, that we ought to march boldly and attempt great things in our Master's name. We never hear of Paul being afraid of getting too far away from Jerusalem. Our past experience affords us every encouragement for pushing forward, for God has very markedly blessed and kept our foremost ranks, and He has greatly impressed us all with the very manifest power of the Spirit in its gracious operations on the hearts of the people."

The opinion thus decidedly expressed by one, whose length of service and of experience is beyond that of any other Congo missionary, and whose leadership, on the ground of his acknowledged abilities and particularly his wise judgment, is gladly recognised by those of other societies as well as those of his own, deserves most careful consideration.

Much by God's help has been accomplished in the past ; by the same help more may be accomplished in days to come.

We conclude this chapter with a table showing the present stations and the missionaries located at them.

LOWER CONGO.

STATIONS.	MISSIONARIES.
<i>San Salvador,</i>	Mr. and Mrs. Lewis, Mr. and Mrs. Graham, and Mr. and Mrs. Phillips.
<i>Underhill,</i> .	Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Forfeitt, Mr. and Mrs. Pinnock, Mr. Pople, and Mr. Stephens.
<i>Wathen,</i> .	Mr. and Mrs. Bentley, Mr. P. Davies, B.A., and Mr. Cameron.

UPPER CONGO.

STATIONS.	MISSIONARIES.
<i>Arthington,</i> .	Mr. and Mrs. Roger, and Mr. Gordon.
<i>Bolobo,</i> .	Mr. and Mrs. Grenfell, Mr. and Mrs. Glennie, and Mr. Fuller.
<i>Lokolela,</i> .	Mr. Clark, Mr. and Mrs. Whitehead, and Mr. and Mrs. Scrivener.
<i>Munsembi,</i> .	Mr. and Mrs. Weeks, Mr. and Mrs. Stapleton, and Mr. Stonelake.
<i>Bopoto,</i> .	Mr. and Mrs. W. L. Forfeitt, Mr. Brown, and Mr. Kirkland.
<i>Mojembo (to be occupied shortly)</i> .	Mr. and Mrs. White and another.
s.s. "Peace" and "Goodwill," .	Mr. and Mrs. Harrison and Mr. Field.





CHAPTER XIII.

OTHER MISSIONS IN CONGO.

CONTEMPLATING the vast myriads upon whose ears the sound of the glorious Gospel of the Blessed God has not yet fallen, it is indeed a satisfaction and a relief to know that there are other missions in Congo than the one whose work has been recorded in the foregoing pages. It is also most pleasant to be assured—though the fact is only what might have been expected—that the relations between the agents of these various societies are of the most cordial and brotherly nature. Indeed, in the case of the two Missions, the Livingstone Inland and the Congo, the policy pursued is avowedly intended to be mutually beneficial, their stations being so planted as to permit of the heartiest co-operation.

When, now more than ten years ago, the Hon. J. W. Merrill of Boston, the then President of the American Baptist Missionary Union, with which Union the Livingstone Mission was then about to become identified, was visiting London, he was warmly welcomed to the Committee of the English Society by the late Treasurer, Mr. Joseph Tritton,

who expressed the earnest hope that by mutual confidence and wise arrangements the great object of both Societies might be the more efficiently secured ; a sentiment most emphatically endorsed by Mr. Merrill. And so also on subsequent occasions of a similar nature these feelings of fellowship have been freely expressed and confirmed.

And abroad the opportunities for showing kindly hospitality are continually occurring. In the matter too of forwarding stores, most invaluable help is rendered by each Mission respectively. The importance, moreover, of a common understanding as to methods of working so as to secure greater efficiency is increasingly recognised and desired. And as to the sympathy shown in times of sorrow, the ungrudging and unwearied attention given in seasons of sickness—all such brotherly ministries have been as readily rendered as, alas! the occasion for them has been frequent. Particular mention may be made here of the important services so often given by Dr. Sims, the qualified Medical Missionary now stationed at Leopoldville, and whose missionary life has extended over some fourteen or fifteen years.

THE LIVINGSTONE INLAND MISSION.

of which we first write, was originated by certain individuals who were deeply interested in the evangelisation of Western Central Africa. For more than two years it was under the direction of a Committee, of which Mr. and Mrs. H. Grattan Guinness were members, Rev. A. Tilley acting as Secretary, and Mr. John Cory as Treasurer. The pioneer Missionaries, Mr. Ström and Mr. Craven arrived at the mouth of the Congo at the end of February, 1878, some few weeks after the landing of Mr. Grenfell and Mr. Comber, Messrs. Telfourd and Johnstone joining them about the end of June.

The first station was founded at a place about five

miles from the Yellala Falls. In Mr. Ström's journal, under date the 9th of June, Whitsunday, there is the following entry: "We held to-day our first public service. I gave each of our workmen a body-cloth; then at 8 A.M. called them together, explained as well as we could that we should worship God. Then I gave out a hymn, read Acts ii., had another hymn, and prayed, then Mr. Craven and I partook of the Lord's Supper. The Spirit of the Most High was in us, on us, and with us. May this be the little stone cut out without hands which shall roll on until it becomes a great mountain."

In December of the same year, 1878, Mr. Peterson and Miss Bosson, to be married to Mr. Craven, started for Africa. Soon after this contingent had embarked, the sad news arrived of the death of Mr. Telfourd, the first of the missionaries to lay down his life for Christ in Congo.

It is interesting to record that in the s.s. *Volta*, by which vessel Mr. Comber returned with his reinforcements, Mr. and Mrs. Vickers and Mr. Richards, additions to the Livingstone staff, were amongst the passengers. As time passed on others were sent out; of these may be mentioned an important contingent consisting of Messrs. M'Call, Clarke, Harvey, Lanceley, and Mrs. Richards, sailing in March, 1880. The Mission had now become identified with the Harley House Institute, being indeed a branch of it, the original Committee acting as the Council.

On hearing of a further loss occurring about this time, Mrs. Guinness wrote:—"We must not sorrow because a costly gift gladly and willingly offered to the blessed Lord Jesus has been accepted by Him. We must not sorrow that a wearied servant has been welcomed Home with exceeding joy and greeted with a cordial 'well done.' Nor must the friends of the Mission be discouraged because it is experiencing trials which were expected. We knew that to evangelise Central Africa would prove a costly project,

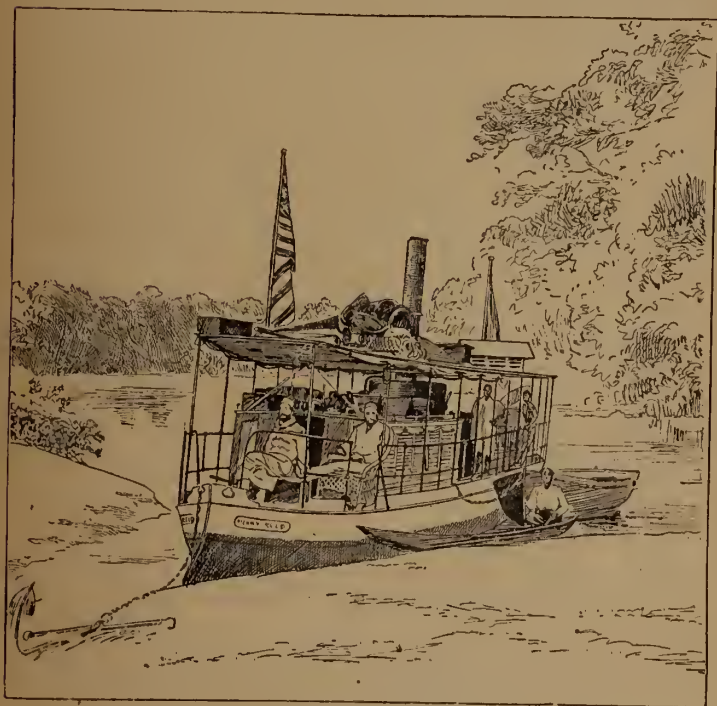
demanding large sacrifices both of life and means. But knowing this, we felt, did we not? that we had no choice in the matter. Our path was to obey, and the command to go into *all* the world was plain!"

Notwithstanding these difficulties and trials the work on the field was making good progress, three stations having been planted—viz., Matadi, Palabala, and Banza Manteke. With the next expedition the little Livingstone steamer launch was despatched. And in July, 1881, the Directors at home expressed their hopeful feelings in the following terms: "There is much that is encouraging. The Mission is gradually taking root and securing the respect and confidence of the natives themselves. Our brethren have so far acquired the language as to be able to communicate pretty freely with the people, and to instruct them and their children."

We have thus dwelt somewhat in detail upon the first stages of this important Mission, but limited space forbids our following its progress step by step. Passing over the next two or three years, we come to an event of great moment—viz., the transference of the Mission to the American Baptist Missionary Union. Though for some months negotiations with a view to this transference had been proceeding, it was not until November, 1884, that the American Society took over the Mission formally into their management. Mr. and Mrs. Guinness were in Boston on the occasion. It was felt to be a red letter day in the history of the Missionary Union. The story of the opening of Central Africa as told by these English visitors, and "of the heroic struggle of their dear pioneer missionaries to introduce the Gospel in that great new world seemed," they said, "to create deep interest wherever they went, and to elicit warm sympathy and Christian zeal."

At the date when the Livingstone Inland Mission was thus handed over to the American Baptists it consisted of six well-established stations, twenty-five

missionaries (men and women), with a steamer just being launched at Stanley Pool, the *Henry Reed*, generously provided by Mrs. Henry Reed, of Tasmania, but which was unfortunately completely wrecked a short time ago; the only condition imposed being



THE "HENRY REED."

that the work should be vigorously maintained, Harley House continuing to act as a British Auxiliary.

On the very same month as this transference was effected Mr. Craven was removed by death, the loss of whose services, as one of the founders and a

devoted leader of the Mission, was deeply felt. But whilst these repeated losses tried the faith of the workers abroad, and saddened the spirits of friends and supporters at home, experience of another kind, such as well might thrill all hearts with thankful joy, was in store. Hitherto, the spiritual results had been few, the past had been a time of sowing; but a Pentecostal blessing was about to be outpoured. The station to realise this wonderful manifestation of Divine grace and power was Banza Manteke. Mr. Henry Richard, the missionary in charge, writing under date of the 6th of August, said: "The bones that had been shaking for some time past began to stand up and show very evident signs of life. Truly the Pentecostal power came as I have never seen before; for the people began to bring out their fetishes for us to burn, and to cry, 'What must we do to be saved?' There was much opposition and persecution, which only seemed to increase the spiritual power; for the bitterest enemies and the greatest sinners were brought under conviction of sin. The interest increased, and the people came up in large numbers to the station. The house became too strait, and we were obliged to hold the services in the open air, and have continued to do so up to the present time, and we have more than 700 converts. The glorious fact is this, that Banza Manteke is no longer a heathen country, but more Christian than any I am acquainted with."

It must, however, be said that in many of these cases time proved the conversions to be nominal rather than real, discipline having to be freely exercised. Yet, taking this fact into consideration, there can be no question but that a great work of God was effected. So much so that when Mr. Grenfell was in this country in 1891 he was able to refer to it with great confidence. Touching upon the encouragement afforded by past experience for pushing forward with the work, and then ascribing the results produced to

the gracious operations of the Spirit of God upon the hearts of the people, he said, "What else was it that produced that wonderful result to the labour of our brother, Richards, of the A.B.M.U.? He went to the Congo almost at the very outset of the missionary enterprise there, and laboured for seven long years in one place without a single sign to encourage him; and the people were so bound up in their cruel customs and superstitions, and their hearts seemed so hard, that he was on the point of giving up and going elsewhere; but at this very time, when he was talking to me of his disappointment and sorrow, the 'leaven' was at work in the heart of the man who had been his strongest opponent, and shortly after he renounced his fetishism, and became the first of a distinguished band of earnest Christians. The work, having commenced, grew apace; and very largely, humanly speaking, as the results of the labours of the native Christians themselves, there is to-day round our brother at Banza Manteke a Church of some three hundred members."

And Banza Manteke is not the only station where large results have been ingathered, the labours at Lukunga being as encouraging. At other stations, Matadi for example, the work is largely of a business nature, as at Underhill, of the Congo Mission. And some stations, which, when planted, were full of promise, have become much restricted in the scope they afford, owing to the removal of the population to other towns.

As to general operations, it may be said, school-teaching, evangelistic efforts, literary and medical work—all these various labours have been and are still being zealously pursued.

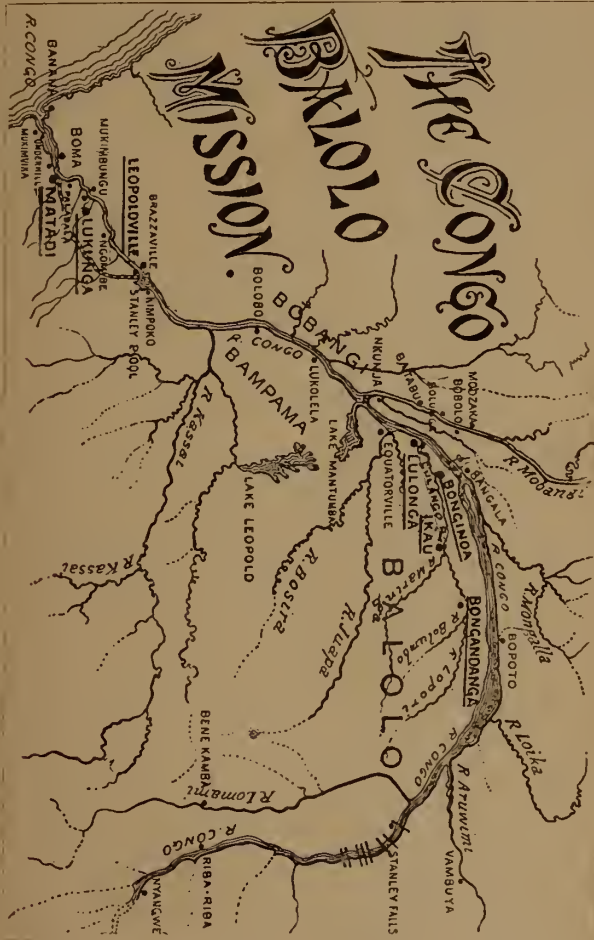
Whilst the Livingstone Inland Mission has suffered perhaps more severely than the sister Mission—whose course has been followed in the preceding pages—through loss by death and enforced return of missionaries, there have never been wanting devoted volun-

teers ready to take vacant places, so that the work has not only been maintained but extended. The report for July, 1894, in its statistical tables, shows ten stations, being enumerated in their order of foundation :—Palabala, Banza Manteke, Matadi, Lukunka, Mukimvika, Leopoldville, Bolengi, Bwemba, Kinjila, and Irebu ; forty-six missionaries, including wives of missionaries and single women, with a church-membership of twelve hundred and seventeen—the last figures, however, it is believed, through the great mortality occasioned by the fatal sleeping sickness, and other circumstances, having undergone considerable revision.

BALOLO MISSION.

When Mr. and Mrs. Guinness transferred the Livingstone Inland Mission to the American Union, there was no intention to cease missionary effort on behalf of Central Africa. An opportunity, therefore, arising in the Providence of God to enter Balolo-land, it was prayerfully and eagerly embraced. The circumstances in which the new enterprise was begun can be simply described. In 1888, Mr. M'Kittrick, who had been located at the then Equator station of the Livingstone Mission, visited England. The sphere of his labours had been within a few miles of the Balolo country. Mr. M'Kittrick, who brought with him a native lad, gave glowing accounts of the people, representing them to be more advanced in civilisation, more intelligent, and more friendly than most of the tribes nearer the coast, but a people, estimated at some ten millions, altogether unevangelised, that it was felt the moment had arrived when a special mission to the Balolo should be attempted; and Dr. Harry Guinness undertook the secretarial duties. To prevent misunderstanding with the American Society, a conference was sought with Dr. Murdoch, its secretary, and as the result, it was cordially decided that the Harley House Auxiliary should henceforth

The Congo Brazzaville Mission.



concentrate its energies upon the effort to send the Gospel to Balolo-land.

The first party set sail in April, 1889, consisting of Mr. and Mrs. M'Kittrick, Miss De Hailes, Messrs. Todd, Blake, Whytock, Howell, Haupt, and the Balolo lad, Bompole; and after calling at the various stations *en route*, arrived safely at their destination, the mouth of the Lulongo, one of the great tributaries of the Congo, some 750 miles from the coast, or about 400 miles beyond Stanley Pool, in the month of August, being conveyed along the reaches of the upper river in the *Henry Reed*, under the direction of Mr. Billington.

Steering some thirty-five miles up the Lulongo, the party cast anchor and ventured to land, notwithstanding the fact that some hundreds of men, armed with spears, had been attracted by the sight of the vessel. Their welcome, however, was not unfriendly when the object of their visit was known. After some palavering, a piece of ground for a station, now called Bonzinda, was secured, and as soon as possible the required houses were erected.

Very interesting is Mrs. M'Kittrick's account of a preaching service in a palaver house on the second Sunday after their arrival:—

“In the cool of the evening, John (Mr. M'Kittrick), Mr. Whytock, and myself went out in a canoe to visit some of the neighbouring towns. We first crossed over to the island which lies a few hundred yards from us. A great crowd gathered on the beach to receive us, and we marched through the town at the head of nearly a thousand people. They were not at all shy, and the children, particularly the boys, were very bold, shouting and laughing all round us. The houses were poorly built, and close together. There were some exceptions, however, to the bad buildings. The public palaver-houses, consisting of large roofs, lofty in the centre and sloping gradually downwards until within two feet of the ground, were the finest

erections we have seen in Africa. We entered one capable of holding 500 people. The inside was dark and very smoky, ten or twelve fires being kindled in different parts of the room, and it was with some difficulty we were able to make out where we were. When our eyes had become accustomed to the gloom and the smoke, we saw a large high chamber, decently clean, except where culinary operations were being carried on. Some charms, fetishes, etc., were hanging from the roof, and running round each side were large pieces of canoe boards, with backs to them, making capital seats. These filled rapidly on our entrance, and in a few moments the place was full, men, women, and children crowding eagerly in to look at the white man and hear his words. Truly an open door is before us! John stood up in the middle and told them the reason of our coming amongst them, and the message of God's love in Jesus Christ His Son. I meanwhile sat and looked at the bright faces, with their black, shining eyes, and gleaming, white teeth, and I must confess my first feeling was one of something very much like despair as I thought, What are we, a handful of feeble, unarmed men, amongst these thousands of heathen savages, and what hope is there of their ever being converted and civilised? It seems, humanly speaking, so improbable, so impossible. Nothing but a miracle can ever change them, and yet, this we have a right to expect from our wonder-working God, in whose hands are the hearts of all men.

"We walked away to the end of the island, and whilst waiting there for the boat, John had another opportunity of delivering his message. We then paddled across to another large town on the mainland, and there found the same thing, hundreds of curious, expectant people. After speaking in the palaver house, we were walking back to the canoe, when a man ran up, saying: 'Give us a little bit of Inzakomba' (God). We willingly consented, and

standing still sang the first verse of 'Jesus loves me' in Lunkundu. The words were very simple, and as we made the people repeat them several times, they soon picked them up, and tried to join in as we sang the verse over and over again. It was quite encouraging after one's dismal thoughts to perceive the readiness with which they listened to what was said to them, and their appreciation of it.

"We have certainly been guided as to settling in this place, by far the most populous district we have seen, and utterly untouched by the Gospel. To-day, for the first time in their lives, many of them have heard the good news. The words which seemed to make the most impression on them were 'Jisu a to Somb iso ukingo'—'Jesus bought for us a neck.' This idiom conveys to them the idea of substitution, and each time John repeated them a low murmur of surprise or approval, I could not tell which, passed through the crowd. The numbers are overwhelming, but in time we shall reach them, by the help of God."

In November of the same year, 1889, a second station at Ikau, a point on the Lunongo at the confluence of the Lopori and Maringa rivers, was planted, Mr. Whytock and Mr. Haupt being the missionaries left in charge. The next station was opened at Lulalga at the mouth of the Lunongo, where it flows into the Congo; and soon after a fourth at Bondondanga on Lopori, 250 miles from the spot where the Lunongo enters the Congo, the reinforcements which had followed the first contingent permitting of this extension. It should also be stated here that by this time the little steamer *Pioneer*, the need of which was so deeply felt, had safely arrived.

As in the initial stages of the Congo Mission, so in those of the Balolo Mission, much of the time of the missionaries had necessarily to be occupied with all kinds of operations involving hard manual labour, or persevering attempts to acquire the language or tedious palavers with chiefs.

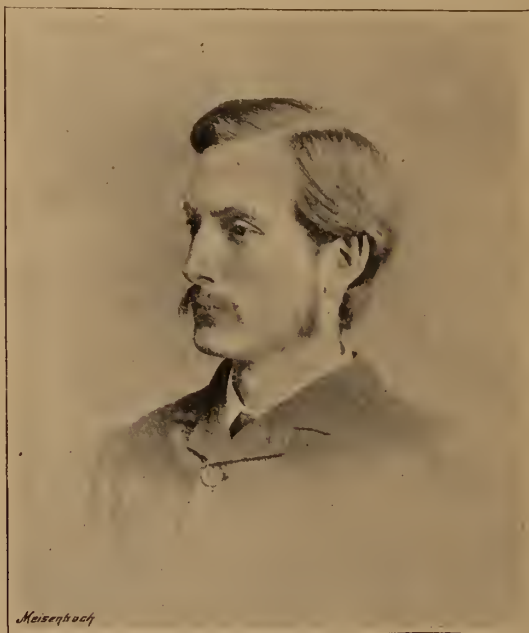
The following description given by Miss De Hailes of the way in which she spent her life at Bonzinda is instructive and interesting.

"This is the way my day is generally employed. I rise at six, so as to get a quiet hour for Bible-reading and prayer before breakfast, at half-past seven. After that we have prayers, and I attend to household duties before service, which is from half-past eight till nine. Then I have Bompole for an hour's study. After that I can never be sure of my time; patients come in, and I am often unable to get a quiet moment till dinner, at twelve o'clock. After dinner I rest for an hour; and if no one comes for medicine, I get a little study or reading. At two o'clock, I have a sewing class for native girls; and then, after a cup of tea, I walk to the town, to teach my school, and often go to visit some of the people on the way back, as I have time and opportunity. They run after me and ask me to go into their houses and tell them of God, and I never like to refuse, though want of time sometimes compels me to do so. It is not wise to stay out after sundown, at least not far away from home. In the evening, after supper, I have a night-school, then attend our evening worship, and afterwards get my writing done.

"Our new houses have boarded floors, and the rooms are beautifully cool and convenient. I like our houses better than any on the Congo, though others are more beautiful; but I prefer ours, made of native material and therefore less expensive. I wish I could get on faster with the language, for I find it very trying to the patience. On Sundays, after service in the chapel in the morning, we visit the towns, each taking a different direction. The darkness and sin in which these poor natives live is awful."

In January, 1891, it was decided that Dr. Harry Guinness should pay a visit to Congo, and in March of that year he started upon his journey, his visit occupying twelve months.

Arriving at St. Thomas on his way home, it was his painful duty to despatch the following telegram, conveying the terrible news of the death of two of the Balolo band, "John M'Kittrick died, November 22nd; Luff died, December 19th." This was, indeed, heart-



JOHN M'KITTRICK.

(Leader of the Congo Balolo Mission.)

rending news. But the very next mail that arrived brought intelligence of the ingathering of the first fruits. And so with blended sorrow and joy the supporters of the Mission gave themselves anew to prayer.

As soon as possible a "welcome home" meeting to receive Dr. Guinness and Mrs. M'Kittrick was

arranged, which was also a "God speed" meeting to bid farewell to five Balolo missionaries, four of them being reinforcements.

Notwithstanding great difficulties and many trials through sickness and death, the Mission has continued to prosper; and so recently as March of the present year, the Directors were able to report fresh indications of the Divine blessing.

THE SWEDISH MISSIONARY ALLIANCE

sent its first missionary to the Congo in 1881, at which date it was in connection with the Livingstone Inland Mission, two other representatives going forth the following year. On the transference of the Livingstone Mission to the American Baptist Missionary Union the Alliance became independent, establishing itself at Mukimbungu, where already its agents had been labouring. Three other stations have since been founded—viz., those at Kibunzi, Diadia, and Nganda, besides a transport station at Londe, all three places being in the neighbourhood of Mukimbungu, on the Lower Congo. Since the commencement of this Mission, forty missionaries, male and female, have been sent out, twelve of whom have succumbed to fever; the missionary, Nils Westlind, who had laboured for the longest period (since 1882) having died as recently as March of the present year. Mr. Westlind was enabled to complete a free translation of the entire New Testament into the language spoken in the district, which was printed at the Kibunzi Mission Press. Other literary work has also been accomplished. The present membership is about 150, and several of the converts are labouring as evangelists. There is much cause for thankfulness on account of the good work done by this Society.

BISHOP TAYLOR'S MISSION.

The leader of this Mission is a Bishop of the

Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States. In the year 1886, with the object of founding stations on the Kasai, an important affluent of the Congo, he set sail from America with a large missionary band of no less than twenty-four in number. Though the bishop is a man of singular devotion, the principle of self-support upon which he founded, and has since conducted his Mission, judged by results, has proved anything but encouraging. Whatever may be the suitability of such a principle to other mission fields, its application to the Congo has proved most disastrous. The bishop has found no lack of men and women ready to labour for Christ in Africa, and he has spent large sums of money in the preliminary steps of establishing stations.

The great loss of life and treasure, issuing in little or no spiritual results, has been cause for sincere lamentation and regret. Many missionaries, owing to want of the means of subsistence, have died, or have been compelled to return to America, whilst those who have attempted to support themselves by agricultural and other pursuits have found, for the most part, the conditions of the Congo anything but favourable.

A traction engine and a vessel sent out, have proved, from lack of adaptation, absolutely useless, so far as the Mission has been concerned.

Stations at Vivi, Isangila, and Kimpoko have been attempted, but the most satisfactory work is that done, on a small scale, at Banana.

Whether the experience of Bishop Taylor's Mission may be regarded as conclusive we do not decide, but so far as the experiment has gone, it is certainly most unfavourable to the policy of self-support.

The other missions at work in Congoland are the American Presbyterian Mission on the Kasai, the Evangelical Missionary Presbyterian Alliance, sometimes called "Simpson's Mission," located near Matadi, and several Roman Catholic Missions working at

various points, both on the Lower and Upper Congo.

It does not come within the scope of this volume to record the operations of societies, other than those whose representatives are labouring in the Congo country. It is fitting, however, it should conclude with the devout and earnest prayer, that whether the messengers of the Cross enter the Dark Continent from the North or the South, from the East or from the West, they may, one and all, as the Divine blessing rests upon their several labours, be instrumental in hastening the happy day, when, from the lands bordering on the Mediterranean to Cape Colony, from the Zambesi to the Congo, the people shall everywhere see the great Light, and rejoice under His healing beams.

THE END.

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